TRUE WEST

ALL TRUE — ALL FACT — STORIES OF THE REAL WEST

December, 1958 - 25c

FEVER FOR GOLD
By J. Frank Dobie

HARNESS RACE
By Walt Coburn

THE BEAST THAT LOOKED LIKE A MAN!

PONY EXPRESS

WIFE OF THE CHIEF

I FOUND A LOST MINE

CHRISTMAS, 1848

PAT GARRETT'S LAST RIDE

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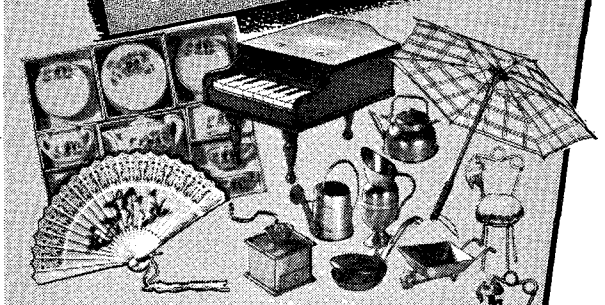

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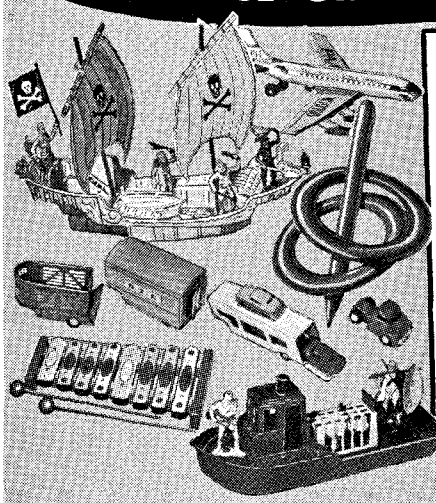

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Coming Up!

HERE'S the lineup for our mid-winter All Star issue:

Leading off is the strange and tragic story of the Mountain Meadows Massacre of September 7, 1857, in which 123 emigrants were massacred by Indians and white men. We believe this version, carefully documented by Kathryn Groesbeck will clear up a lot of the mystery that has shrouded the massacre for a hundred years.

"Silver Queen" is the story of Baby Doe Tabor, the beautiful wife of Colorado's famed "Silver King," H. A. W. Tabor. At the peak of his fabulous career, Tabor was reputedly worth $100,000,000. The Silver King went broke when his mines petered out and his far-flung investments proved unsound. He died in 1899. He had retained one mine and his last words to his wife were: "Don't give up the Matchless. It will make millions again." How Baby Doe kept the trust for thirty-six years is told here by K. M. Woodley.

Tom Bailey, who wrote that unforgettable article "Outlaw Exterminators, Inc." is back again with a dramatic yarn titled "Mystery of the Vanishing Wagons."

The gruesome story of the "Murdering Benders" is familiar to most Western history fans. Old Man Bender, Mamma Bender, son John and sister Katie, ran a roadhouse in the Kansas back country that was in reality a murder farm where guests were disposed of with hammer and knife. The law finally got wise, but the Benders were never caught. Don Martin, in his absorbing article, "The End of Old Man Bender?" presents his own theory as to what happened to the "Bloody Four."

IN the voluminous annals of the Northwest Mounted Police, there is nothing to compare with the bloody, heroic saga of *Kakee-manitou-wayo,* the Cree brave known to the whites as Almighty Voice. Norm Wiltsey tells his story in "Last Warrior."

"Mean as Hell!" by Monk Lofton, is the story of Dee Harkey, an old-time Texas-New Mexico lawman. This article is believed to be the last interview Dee Harkey ever gave. The ninety-two-year-old ex-marshal examined the copy two weeks before his death on June 18, 1958.

Artist-writer Lea McCarty tells the story of A. M. King, deputy to Wyatt Earp, in his fascinating article "The Last Man." There may be other old-time lawmen still alive. One thing is sure—if any "Earp era" lawmen are still around to contest Mr. King's claim to the title, we'll hear from them!

Prospector Milton F. Rose concludes his series on lost mines in the next issue and Nell Murbarger returns with the latest product of her talented typewriter and camera. "Murder on the Trail" is a chilling tale, but—as author Murbarger notes in her introduction—it is also "a memorial to blood and guts, and determination and dreams."

Short subjects include an article by E. E. Kirkpatrick titled "I Found $128,000.00!" and Sondra Rabone's "What is the West?"

As usual, "Truly Western" tops off the whole shebang in lively style.

See you later, Podner.

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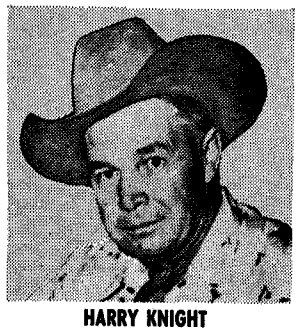

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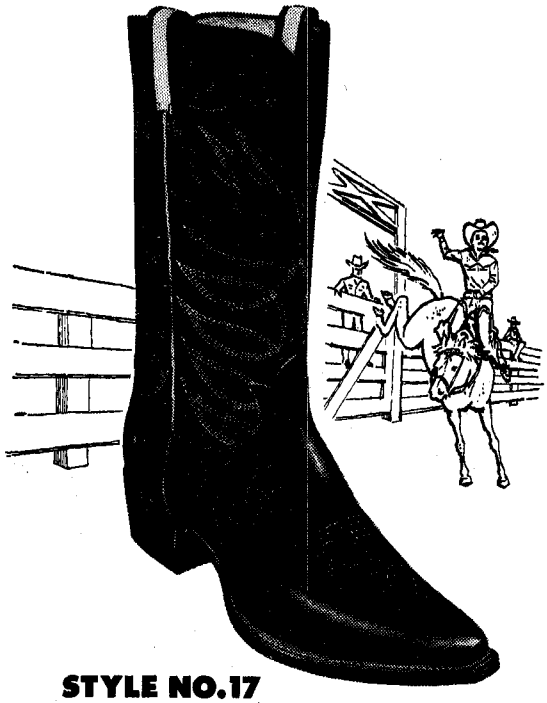

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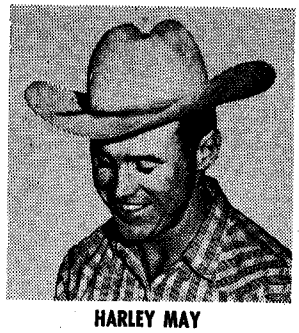

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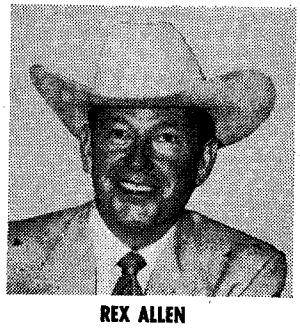

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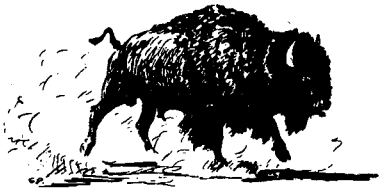

November-December, 1958
Volume 6, No. 2
Whole No. 30

True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

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Cover: Taylor Oughton

A "SMALL" PUBLICATION

TRUE WEST is published bi-monthly by WESTERN PUBLICATIONS, P.O. Box 5008, 709 West 19th St., Austin 31, Texas. 25c per copy, $3.00 for 12 issues in the United States and Possessions. $3.75 for 12 issues in Canada and all other countries. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Austin, Texas, April 22, 1953, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at Denver, Colorado.

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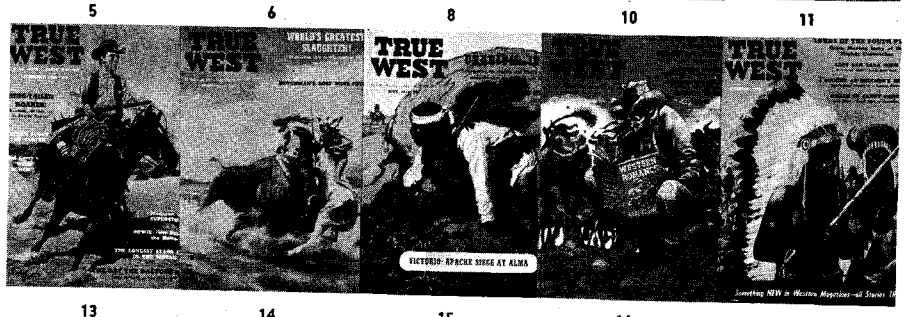

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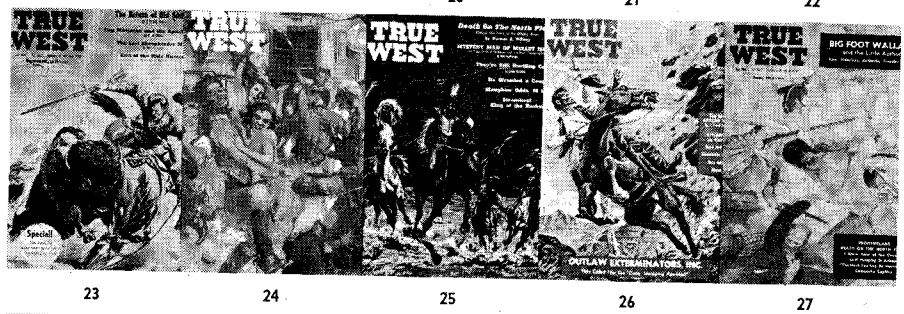

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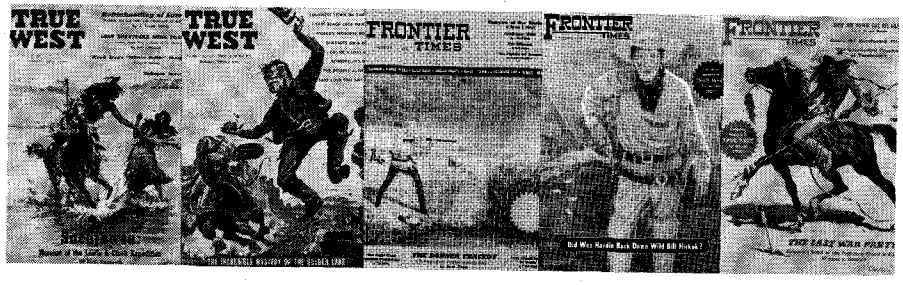

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All his life Pat Garrett seemed destined for trouble and misfortune. Some old-timers called him "snake-bit" for having killed Billy the Kid. This is the absorbing story of

Pat Garrett's Last Ride

By C. L. SONNICHSEN

Frontier Pix

Pat Garrett

CARL ADAMSON came to the Garrett ranch about five o'clock in the afternoon. It was February 28, 1908—a crisp New Mexico winter day. The sun had already dropped behind the long rampart of the San Andres which rose behind the house. The steep upward slope was washed with soft shadows; the canyons were rivers of deeper black.

Pat Garrett came out to answer Adamson's "Hello the house!", grunted a greeting, and walked beside his visitor as he led his horses toward the corral. Garrett was fifty-eight years old now. His hair and mustache were graying, but the old man-hunter still held his six feet, four inches erect and walked with an easy stride. His somber, deeply-lined face, with the suggestion of Indian blood in its sharp planes and high cheekbones, was dark with care and worry.

Mrs. Garrett watched disapprovingly from the door. She did not like Adamson in spite of his jolly red face and hearty manner and wished he had not come. She was growing more and more frightened—more hopeless about the difficulties into which Pat seemed to be sinking like a man caught in quicksand. On his last trip to El Paso he had even received an anonymous letter threatening his life. After the fashion of Mexican women, she kept her thoughts to herself, but she did not trust Adamson, and it was in her mind that his visit meant trouble.

She knew that money was at the bottom of it. None of Pat's schemes had turned out well since Teddy Roosevelt had refused to reappoint him to the office of Collector of Customs at the Port of El Paso. He had moved his family to this lonely ranch—hadn't been able to pay his taxes—finally borrowed $3,500 from his neighbor, W. W. Cox. Some of the Garrett cattle had been placed in Cox's pasture under Cox's brand in order to get them out of the way of creditors. When Pat was unable to pay what he owed, Cox refused to give up the stock. He offered to buy the ranch, but Pat swore he would not sell. There was some bitterness between the two men.

Wayne Brazel was a worse problem. At Cox's suggestion Pat had leased him a big pasture—to run cows, he assumed. But Brazel surprised him by bringing in a big herd of goats which Pat, like any cattleman, hated and despised. Adamson had come along wanting to lease land so he and his partner could winter a herd of Mexican cattle on the ranch. It sounded like a good deal, but there were those goats in the way. If they could be disposed of, the bargain could be made. Adamson was talking about buying the goat herd himself just to get rid of it, and Pat was eager for him to do so.

They were deep in discussion as they came back to the house, talking earnestly with overtones of exasperation in their voices. Goats . . . buyer . . . Brazel . . . delivery March 15 . . . have to do something!

"So Brazel ran his count?" Adamson was saying.

"Yes, and it came out better than eighteen hundred head."

"That's too many goats. We can't pay for more than twelve hundred; we ain't got the money. And if Wayne Brazel wants four dollars a head, we can't pay for *that* many."

"Carl, you know how I'm fixed. I've got to get those damn stinking, blatting pests off my range. They're ruining me and the whole ranch. Brazel says he'll move if he can sell his stock. You're willing to buy. There's got to be some way to swing this deal. Can't you borrow the money to handle six hundred head more? Can't your partner help you?"

"Miller? I doubt it. He's got a ranch in Oklahoma but we spent all our ready cash on them Mexican cattle—all but what it will take to lease this ranch. We like the place fine. It's just what we want for holding the bunch till we get them in shape for a long drive next fall. But we can't buy all those goats and lease the ranch too. Don't you know anybody that wants goats?"

"No, I don't. And there ain't much time to look around if you expect those cows to be delivered in El Paso on March 15."

"That's a fact. But they don't know me in Las Cruces, and they do know you. You ought to be able to do something yourself."

"My God, man, I'm in over my head now. I had to borrow from Cox to pay my back taxes, and now he's run a brand on my cows that I've been keeping in his pasture. I can't move a foot."

"We'll go to town in the morning and see what can be done. Miller is there now and we'll see what he says."

"Jim Miller! You say he's from Fort Worth. Maybe I know him. Well, we'll see about it in the morning."

They went inside and sat down to supper.

Breakfast the next morning was even gloomier than the meal the night before. Garrett ate in stony silence as did Frank Adams, his foreman. Mrs. Garrett moved about wordlessly and sadly. Little Oscar came in scowling like a thundercloud and dragging a bandaged leg. He was supposed to go into town with his father, but he had slipped on

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This was Las Cruces, New Mexico, about the way it looked that day in early 1908 when Pat Garrett was shot and killed while riding towards the town to discuss a business deal. The shooting—possibly done by Jim Miller—brought to an end a colorful chapter in western history. Garrett's life was a checkerboard of fame and bad luck.

his mother's freshly scrubbed floor, knocked over a bucket of lye water, and come out of it with a badly skinned and burned knee. Adamson himself for once was without a joke. They all seemed relieved when it was time to get up and go.

Mrs. Garrett watched them drive away, her husband sitting straight-backed in the buggy with his shotgun, muzzle down, beside him. He rode with his chin thrust forward and his hat pulled low over half-closed eyes like a man squinting at far horizons. She stood there while the buggy grew smaller under that vast sky, diminished to the size of child's toy, and dropped into nothing on the other side of a hill. It was a four-hour drive to Las Cruces. They would be there by noon. She sighed, turned back to the small house where there was always so much to be done, and plunged into the morning chores.

A LONG and devious road had brought Pat Garrett to this last morning—a road which began on June 14, 1850, in Alabama and led westward to Louisiana six years later. Colonel John L. Garrett had six children and plenty of money in those years and let his boys develop according to their own ideas. Patrick Floyd preferred business to school and went to work in his father's plantation store.

The Civil War came, and bad days followed. Colonel Garrett died—his wife soon after. The plantation went to pieces. At the age of eighteen, Pat gave it up and pulled his freight for Texas.

Dallas County—new land—immigrants—cattle drives—cotton patches! Then a farm in south Texas where a man couldn't even plant a crop without grubbing enough roots and stumps to start a wood yard. One year on share was enough of that. Pat edged westward, learning to rope and ride with the best of them, developing his skill with pistol and rifle.

By 1875 he was ready for a rougher life and threw in with a party en route to the buffalo plains. For three winters he joined in the great slaughter, dropping buffalo by the hundreds while the skinners stripped off the hides and left the carcasses to rot on the prairie.

His first big trouble came in '77. He was in partnership with another buffalo hunter named Glenn and was camping with a crew of roustabouts and skinners on McKenzie Lake where the town of Benjamin now stands. When they had been in camp for some time and nerves were as taut as a trace chain, the partners quarreled over the division of their hides. Glenn came at Garrett with an axe.

Pat was not anxious to fight. He ran around the tent trying to get away, Glenn following with blood in his eye. As he ran, Pat saw the stock of his old buffalo gun showing under the canvas. He grabbed it and faced about.

"Glenn, you stop where you are, or I'll kill you!"

Glenn kept coming, and Garrett blew him into the outdoor fireplace.

One of the men hitched up a team of mules and drove over to Uncle George Knox's camp where John Meadows (who tells the story) was working. Uncle George came back with the driver.

"You'd better go on in to Fort Griffin, Pat," he advised. "Leave a guard here and go give yourself up. You've got nothing to fear if you take a couple of witnesses."

Instead of leaving a guard, he took the whole force into Griffin with him. When they got back, after Pat had been released without even having to put up a bond, they found an awful mess waiting for them. The Indians had come in and cut most of their stock of hides to ribbons. There wasn't enough left to pay the men their wages, so they broke up camp, took what hides they could find, carted them to Griffin, and divided the proceeds. What Pat's men thought of him may be learned from the fact that they made him take an equal share with the rest of them.

THEN it was westward again. He lived an unwritten chapter of his life in Midland, where some people are still said to claim kin with him. The wild town of Tascosa in the Panhandle came next, and finally in the fall of 1878 he rode into Fort Sumner in the Pecos Valley.

Already Fort Sumner was the focus of a gathering storm. John Chisum's great herds were being systematically decimated by rustlers, both professional and part time. Major Murphy and Chisum were feuding. Stolen cattle from the Panhandle were crowding Pat Coghlan's slaughter pens at Fort Stanton, where he filled his government beef contracts. Lincoln County was full of dangerous characters who would kill a man "to see him kick."

Pat did all right in this lead-weighted environment. The first cowman he asked for a job said he was sorry but he didn't need a man.

"That's too bad," Pat told him, "because I came here for a job and I've got to have one."

As Pat's friend Emerson Hough tells it, the cattleman was impressed by this unusual attitude.

"What can you do, Lengthy?" he inquired.

"Ride anything with hair on it, and rope better than any man in your outfit."

"All right, get in."

Pat got in; and when his cowboy job gave out, he tried running a restaurant—then became a partner in Beaver Smith's store and saloon.

That was when he began to be friendly with a young fellow called Billy the Kid. They say that Pat was known as Big Casino and Billy as Little Casino in the Fort Sumner gambling halls and that each was ready to stake the other

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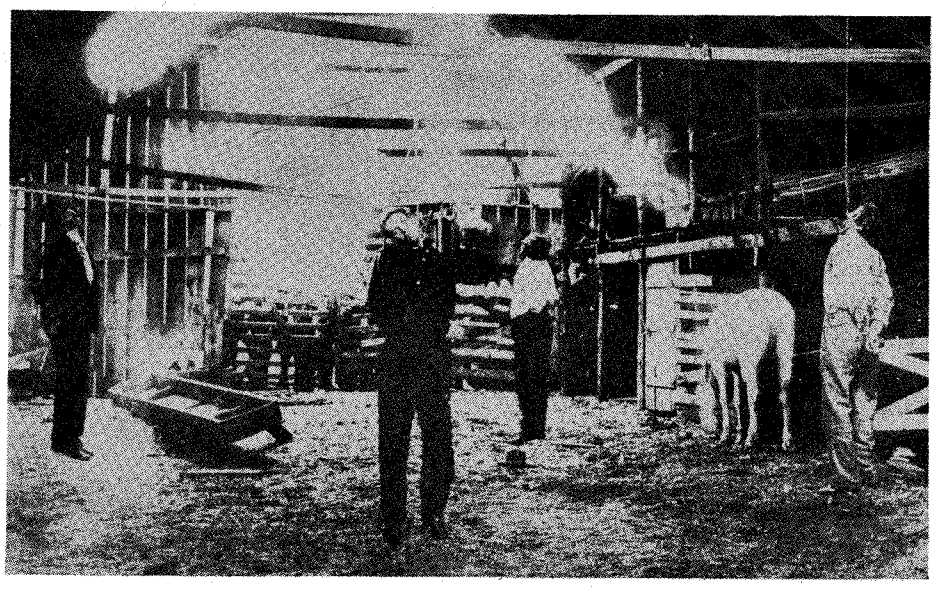

Left: Here—in an Ada, Oklahoma, barn—Jim Miller, whom many believed to be the killer of Pat Garrett, met his end the victim of a lynch mob. The three others are named, left to right, Allen, Burwell, and West, who hired Miller to do another killing. The white horse shown in the picture was used to drop the men to their deaths. Miller is shown below.

Frontier Pix

when luck ran the wrong way. The Mexicans had another nickname for Garrett. They called him *Juan Largo*—Long John.

Soon after his arrival he married Juanita Gutierrez, a Fort Sumner girl who died shortly after. On January 14, 1880, he married her sister Apolinaria (or Pauline), who bore him eight children and was much beloved by all who knew her.

Being now a settled resident of Fort Sumner with a wife and two nicknames, he was drawn into the life of the community. Since he was a good shot and obviously not afraid of anybody, he had no difficulty in becoming a deputy sheriff. In the elections of 1880 he was persuaded to run against his boss, Sheriff George Kimbell.

It was a hot campaign. Garrett announced that if elected he would put Billy the Kid and his gang out of business. Billy himself worked against Garrett; his friends sent out a stream of threats and warnings—but Pat won the election. Then everybody waited expectantly for something to break loose.

Pat took his time. One by one the minor outlaws found their way out of the county or into jail. The new sheriff was never one to worry about the technicalities of the law, but he was proud of his reputation for keeping his word, even to the outlaws. Years later Theodore Roosevelt remarked that Pat Garrett did not uphold law and order in southern New Mexico—he introduced it.

In due time he got around to Billy the Kid. On July 14, 1881, Garrett, John W. Poe and Kip McKinney came to Fort Sumner on a tip that Billy might be there visiting a sweetheart. In Pete Maxwell's darkened bedroom Pat fired the shot that ended the Kid's career as a gunman.

Overnight Long John became famous. He acquired a new title—"Slayer of Billy the Kid"—and entered the ranks of frontier nobility. Wherever people discussed the exploits of Western gunmen—wherever the *Police Gazette* was read—Garrett's name was known. It was only in his own country that he lost ground. There, however, the ethics of the scene in Maxwell's bedroom were much debated and Pat was severely condemned. Many a man who would have done exactly as he did under similar circumstances opined positively that it was plain murder to shoot the Kid without warning—and that the deed was so much the darker because the men had once been friends. The feeling was strong enough to prevent Pat's renomination for the sheriff's office.

To keep the pot boiling he stocked a ranch on Eagle Creek in the Sierra Blanca and did well enough for a couple of years. In 1885 he gave up the ranch in order to organize a company of Texas Rangers to discourage cattle thieves who operated along the Texas-New Mexico line. Five months later he abandoned this project to become manager of the V V outfit, a huge new ranching project put together by Captain Brandon Kirby, an Englishman with considerable capital, and a Scotchman named Cree. Garrett lasted only a few months in this job. John Meadows asserted that he and Garrett were discharged at the same time and neither of them ever knew why.

Without breaking his stride Pat plunged immediately into another venture. He acquired some land on the Hondo River below Roswell and dreamed of developing a great irrigation project with Pecos water and artesian wells. Years later his dream was realized by others, but Pat himself got only as far as organizing a company and building a ditch. Unhappy over his defeat in the race to become sheriff of newly organized Chavez County, he closed out all his affairs in New Mexico and moved to Uvalde, Texas.

FOR five years he lived there, breeding race horses and dabbling in county politics. A particular friend of his was a young lawyer named John Nance Garner. If Colonel A. J. Fountain had not lost his life in 1896, Garrett might have lived out his days in Texas and slept under the Uvalde live oaks. Life had a few more unexpected turns for him, however. When Fountain and his eight-year-old son Henry disappeared forever—supposedly the victims of cattle rustlers whom the Colonel was prosecuting—Pat came back to Las Cruces at the invitation of Governor Thornton to try to solve the mystery.

The Fountain case did his cause no good. He never did arrest the men he wanted—they came in when they got ready. In one or two encounters Pat and his men came off second best. The whole country was divided by a political feud which was much too hot for Pat or anybody else to put down at the moment—a feud which throws off sparks even today and which may have had something to do with the hard feelings which led to his death.

He got out of the mess temporarily in 1901 when Theodore Roosevelt made him Collector of Customs at El Paso, over determined opposition from the staunch Republicans. Pat had been a Democrat all his life up to the time of his return to Las Cruces, and the Republicans (especially the ones who wanted the job themselves) held this against him. Important people were on his side, however—people like Thomas S. Hubbell, Solomon Luna and General Lew Wallace, all of whom paid personal calls on the President in Pat's behalf. Roosevelt had a weakness for colorful personalities and needed little prodding to give Garrett the job.

He moved his family to El Paso and became an important figure in barroom circles. There is no getting around the fact that Pat Garrett was most at home among the sporting element. He drank a good deal more than was good for him, played a lot of poker, bet on horse races, and cultivated such friends as Tom Powers, the genial, one-eyed proprietor of the Coney Island Saloon. He wore striped suits and did the best he could with his job.

His best was just barely good enough. Garrett in the brush running down a bandit was one thing. Garrett behind a desk in the Collector's office was another. Criticism bubbled to the surface from time to time, and there was talk once of having him removed from office—talk possibly inspired by one of the disappointed office seekers. He finished his term, but Roosevelt refused to reappoint him. It was said that the President took offense when Garrett brought his friend Tom Powers with him to an official banquet in San Antonio and placed him directly behind the President in a group picture.

THE long trail finally led back to the Tularosa country—to the lonely ranch on the flanks of the San Andres.

(Continued on page 30)

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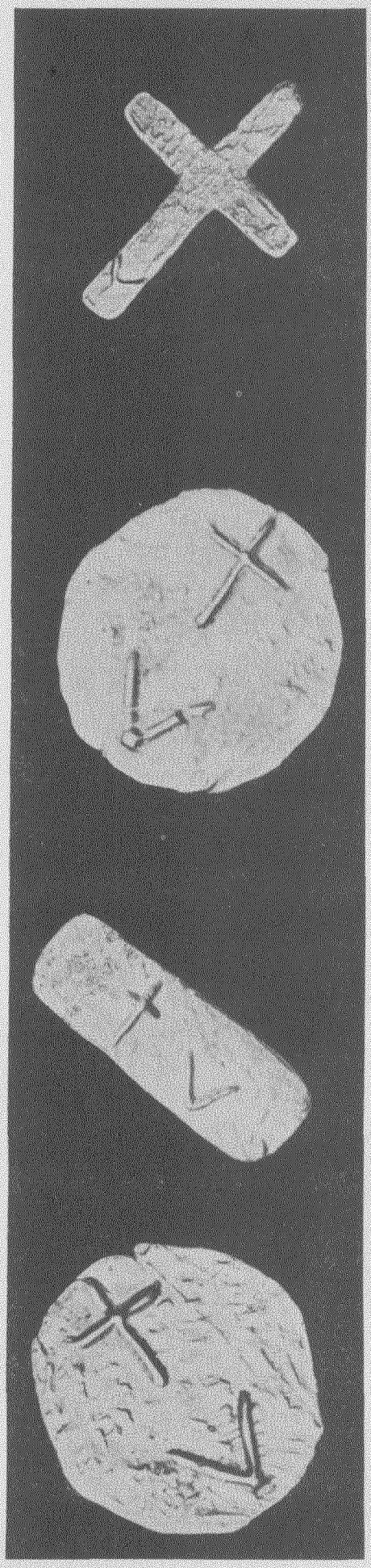
I found a lost mine

By MILTON F. ROSE



SYNOPSIS:

In Part One of his series, author Rose described his early background in mine and treasure hunting and then told of meeting Chief Six, an ancient Pima Indian, whom he believed had knowledge of a lost Spanish mine. The story resumes at that point.

We visited the chief and his wife again and again, bringing them small gifts each time. This cemented the friendship between us, but failed to elicit any information on the mine. During all this time, Dad and I searched the mountains for several miles north of Montezuma Head. Each time we stopped to talk with Chief Six he always wanted a report on where we had gone and if we had found anything. Patiently, I gave him a careful account of our search.

One day while describing a strange rock formation, I had the unmistakable feeling that the chief had an accurate mental picture of that same formation. I stopped short, remarking casually that some people even if blind could see quite clearly with the eyes of the mind. "My blind brother was that way," I added—and waited for the chief to speak.

THE silence grew almost intolerable as Chief Six turned his sightless eyes toward me. There wasn't a vestige of emotion on that wrinkled, mask-like face for nearly a minute—then suddenly the old man chuckled and said softly, "Tell me about your blind one."

Quietly I told him about my brother. He listened intently, and when I had finished, nodded his head. "Yes, it is true. The Great Spirit makes up to us sightless ones by giving us inner eyes. It is good that this is so."

He called to his wife, asking her to bring him his sticks. She came out, bringing some thin, long sticks that had many small carvings on them. This was the first time I had seen the Indian history sticks. The chief picked up several of the sticks and began running his gnarled fingers over them. He found the one he wanted and began to talk.

"Many years ago in the time of my father's father, the Spaniards came and started prospecting the country. All the tribes around were friendly to them. The Pimas, Papagos, Maricopas, and even some few Yaquis who lived not far from here. The Spaniards found several gold mines and one silver mine in the Mountains of the Stars. At one mine they built a stone cabin and a long stone fence to corral their mules. There was a spring near the cabin. It was the only spring in the mountains, and on the rock above the spring they carved a cross. Across the wash from the cabin there was a high white knoll of rock, shot through with red streaks. This the Spaniards called *oro*. They chiseled off the rock, loaded it onto the mules and carried it to the river Gila where they had an *arrastre*. The chief and the *padre* lived in the cabin. The other men built brush shelters not unlike those of the Apaches."

The chief's story droned on and on, but this is the gist of it:

The Spaniards had also found a silver mine farther down the mountain, at the confluence of two washes. At this mine, there was a pit and two tunnels into the side of the mountain. The dumps in front of the tunnels "were very blue." All the material from this pit was removed and hauled to the river.

There was also a gold mine in the area south of where the pictographs are carved on the rocks, quite a way out into the desert. This was the richest mine of all, according to the chief, as the "yellow iron" (gold) could be easily seen in the rock. In fact, there was more "yellow iron" than there was rock! This shaft was well hidden by the Pimas after they had killed the Spaniards. Heavy ironwood logs had been cut and placed across the top and then dirt was piled high and smoothed down, so that in a short while not even those who had done the work could find it. "If I could see,"

The storied past comes to light as a modern-day gold seeker investigates an ancient Spanish mine and prepares to hunt another

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said the chief, "I could take you to the near vicinity, but could not find the place even then."

THE trail at the foot of the mountain to the silver mine had been erased, but nothing was done to cover up or hide this mine. The chief remembered—or thought he remembered—that the mine was full of water. The trail led down the side of the mountain, branching off up a canyon filled with boulders as large as houses on its way to the silver mine. Thence, the trail led along the foothills to the Gila River where there was an *arrastre,* and to another gold mine in the foothills back from the river. The mine at the river and the one at the cabin were not as rich as the one out in the desert, so the Spaniards had quit working those two mines. The chief estimated the total depth of these two diggings as being about the distance from his front porch to the fence gate, or about seventy-five feet. The tunnels to the silver mine, he said, were about half that distance, and the pit at the silver mine was about the depth of four tall men, or about twenty-five feet.

The *muy rico* mine was as deep or deeper than the depths of the other two mines combined, and had tunnels running off at several levels. "It is so well hidden," went on Chief Six, "that no white man or Indian will ever find it. All gold along the surface had been completely removed. The Pimas labored many days carrying dirt to cover the place over to the depth of several feet, and to make the ground as it had been in the beginning. Cactus and mesquite had been planted in the ground to help conceal any trace of disturbance.". (I made a mental note at this point as to what to look for to find this mine.)

Ending his story abruptly, the old Indian rose and asked us to take him out to a spot where he could see the length of the Estrellas. We had gone but a short distance when we could see the entire length of the mountains by slightly turning our heads. There we stopped.

"Do you see some dog-toothed peaks on the top ridge of the mountains?" asked the chief. I told him that I did. I did not, however, tell him that I could see *several* sets of dog-toothed peaks.

"The silver mine is below the dog-toothed peaks," said the chief slowly. "The gold mine at the cabin is half-way between the peaks and the south end of the mountain."

At such a spot in the terrain, I could see two small peaks shaped like dog teeth. Further north there were two more such peaks at what I would guess to be the distance of the silver mine. As my eyes looked farther north, I could see two more dog-toothed peaks and still two more even farther north. The silver mine could be below either of the three sets of peaks.

We then went back to the porch to sit and rest and talk. The chief read further from his sticks relating to the bad acts of the Spaniards and why the Pimas had attacked and killed them. The battleground had been all along the way from the river to far out on the desert, as the Pimas chased the Spaniards trying to kill them all. Only two of them escaped, the chief of the party and the *mozo* who waited on him. The chief and his man servant had good horses and armor. Those on foot and on muleback had been caught and killed. The pictographs tell the story, the chief said.

I asked the chief how old he was. He replied that he did not know and could not tell, but that he was of warrior age before the white man came. I asked him who was the first white man he had ever seen. He told me that he had gone to the Casas Grande to see his first white man—that one that had carved his name on the walls.

"You mean Pauline Weaver, the scout," I told him.

"Yes, that is the one," he nodded

"How old were you then?" I persisted.

He thought a long moment before replying. "I had been a warrior several years," he answered, holding up his hands with all fingers extended. "Maybe this many years, maybe a little more or less. Perhaps this much." He folded two fingers down.

Pauline Weaver had visited the Casas Grande in 1832, as his name and the date carved on one of the inner walls attest. That would make Chief Six at least 120 years old at the time we were talking to him about the lost mines. He died a few years later, in either 1935 or 1936, at the age of 126 or thereabouts.

THE next weekend after the chief's story, my father and I went down the edge of the Estrellas to where we estimated we were about at the spot where the first set of dog-toothed peaks would be on the crest of the mountain. They could not be seen from the side we were on. At this spot we were close to the edge of the mountains and had come out on a rather flat spot. The mountain presented what seemed to be a solid wall or front. This proved to be an optical illusion, as we soon found the beginning of a built-up trail about two feet wide.

The trail led us gradually upward and around a point of the mountain. Just around the point we came onto a stone fence that stretched in a great circle and could be followed for a considerable distance with the eye. Hearts beating fast, we followed the dim trail on up. Finally we came to a rock cabin with a dirt roof.

The cabin was built against the steep wall of the canyon, and had one small window with bars in it that looked out to the other side of the canyon. One side of the cabin was made of solid rock. The trail passed under the window, which was three feet higher than my head. On the south side of the cabin a door opened only a few feet from the canyon wall. Old rotten pack-saddles and hand-wrought mining tools were lying about. The floor of the cabin contained more pack-saddles, mining tools and the peculiar straw hats the Spaniards had used as ore buckets.

These Spanish ore hats are worthy of description. They have crowns about two feet tall and are small-brimmed, with a heavy lining or band inside. The Spaniards pushed these crowns down inside until they rested on the tops of the heads of the wearers, forming pockets in which the broken ore was placed. The inside tip had a pad to reduce chafing. This method of ore-carrying left the hands free to grasp the rungs of the chicken ladders that they used to get up and down in the mines. A Spanish mine ladder, or chicken ladder as the *gringos* called it, was made of a length of solid pole. At about step distances along the pole, short cross-pieces were fastened to the pole with green rawhide thongs. The thongs were wetted and the ladder laid out in the sun to dry. The green rawhide would shrink or draw up tight, holding the cross-member to the pole very solidly.

After inspecting the inside of the cabin, we followed the trail on up. It crossed the wash, and there underneath a large rock was the shaft opening. I looked down into it. It slanted downward and was dug out in step fashion, the steps being from six to eight feet high. There was a chicken ladder on each step, that looked to be as sound as the day they had been installed. You never take chances in old mines, so I got a firm hand-hold on the big rock and kicked the top ladder. It crumpled into a rotten heap.

Other means of getting down into the mine would have to be devised, but we would worry about that later. Carefully, I studied the edges of the shaft. The small quartz vein came up the side of the shaft topside. My eye followed it on top of the ground for a few feet and then it was no longer there. I realized that a large body of quartz rock had been removed between the edge of the shaft and steep edge of the canyon wall. From pieces of ore I found in the worked-over area, I later learned that the rock ran $90 in gold, at the then twenty-dollar per ounce price, to the ton. At least several hundred tons had been removed, and no doubt some of it had been richer than the above quoted price. It was clear that the Spaniards had found themselves a bonanza here, even if they hadn't lived long to enjoy it.

IT is a strange and thrilling experience to step suddenly from the twentieth century back into the musty corridors of time by discovering a mine dating back to the days of the Spanish *padres* on our continent. We were awed and excited, but primarily we were practical gold seekers and so we wasted no time on dreamy retrospection. There was work to be done and we got at it.

First, we erected a discovery monument, put up other markers to outline the claim, and inserted the filled-out claim paper in the discovery monument. While outlining the boundaries of the claim, I found the spring and the cross carved above it on the rock—the same kind of Jesuit markings as appear on the silver bars in the photograph. I also found evidence that the Spaniards had worked a lot of placer from the wash below the mine; in fact, they had completely cleaned out the placer gold. There was no trail to the upper part of the mountain from the cabin, so there were no other diggings in the vicinity or higher up on the mountainside.

The next day I brought a long manila rope from the car, as well as carbide lights, sample sacks and a prospector's pick. Thus equipped, I went down into the mine.

The shaft was about seventy-five feet deep. The six-inch-wide quartz vein, which I sampled at intervals, carried on down to the bottom where it changed course abruptly. The air smelled stale at the bottom, so I unrolled and wadded up a bunch of newspapers I had brought with me. I placed the wad of newspapers on the bottom of the shaft and set them afire. The smoke rushed upward and the good air came down, completely changing the air in the place. I breathed deeply of the fresh air, then went on to explore and sample the workings.

There was a large room at the bottom of the shaft—twelve feet high, ten feet wide and twenty-five feet long. Obvious-

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ly this had been a large pocket of ore. At the far end of the room, at right angles to its length, there was a drift to the left about twenty-five feet long and to the right about ten feet long. The drifts were barely wide enough for me to turn sidewise. I followed both drifts and sampled the vein in the ends as well as in the top. I could not locate the vein in the bottom due to mud. I later found evidence to show that the mine had been filled with water in the past. I went back into one of the drifts and examined the top, discovering a porous condition that would allow water to pour in. I guessed that the drifts were directly parallel with the course of the wash above. Hence, when it rained and water came down the creek it would run into the mine until the place was filled up to the creek level. My deduction proved to be correct.

As I made my way out of the mine, I found a pocket in the side of the shaft that contained a seven-pronged brass candlestick, more ore hats and hand-wrought mining tools.

We made our way down to the car, carrying the ore samples, antique tools and candlestick, and our equipment. We decided to stop off at the Chief's house to tell him the news.

CHIEF SIX was delighted that we had found the mine at the cabin and asked to have the place redescribed to him. He kept nodding his head as I talked, reliving old times. It was amazing to see the animation and interest this old, old man displayed. He asked me if I had seen a large mountain goat on the peaks above the mine. I told him that I had indeed seen such a goat, and that the animal had moved to keep me in sight at all times as though he was extremely interested in what we were doing. The Chief's leathery face split in a grin. "Ha, that is just what he *was* doing! That Old One has been there on the mountains for many years. He guards the place, but he will leave now that the mine has been rediscovered. You will see that I am right."

The old Indian had called the turn. I did not see the goat again, either at that point or at any other place in the mountains. It was sort of spooky. Still, knowing wild goats as I do, I could have been wrong about him not being around. Goats are crafty, cunning creatures and this one may have just been keeping out of my sight but watching me just the same. Oddly, he had shown no fear of men on that first day at the mine. I had got within two or three hundred feet of him, while he stood like a statue and watched me. He followed us down the mountain as we departed and stood motionless atop a ridge two hundred yards distant as we climbed into the car. I looked back several times as I drove away and could still see him standing there until the rough terrain blotted him from view. Just curious? Frankly, I don't know.

The samples turned out to be very poor, except for the ones taken down the shaft. Three dollars per ton was the assay on the samples we took in the bottom of the shaft, and this of course wouldn't pay to work it. We did the assessment work and held the claim for a number of years. At one time we leased the mine to other parties, but they only spent their money uselessly.

Upon becoming resigned to the fact of the cabin mine's low grade ore, we next decided to work on down the mountain to find the trail leading to the silver mine. (A prospector is like a gambler, he never quits even if he hits the jackpot.) Months later, we had reached the river without finding another trail into the mountains. At the river we found the *arrastre,* and after some very diligent prospecting found the second gold mine there.

Map by Lowell Butler

The mine also had a shaft and the chicken ladders were still in it. The vein was exposed along a ridge for some distance and had many holes dug at intervals along its course. The holes were dug at wide spots in the vein, actually pockets, and varied in size and width. Accordingly, the vein varied in width from two feet to eight feet in places along its course. Samples of the rose quartz vein averaged $25 to the ton.

The shaft was about eighty feet deep. Several drifts had been run out from it —one at about forty feet down and one at the bottom. The drifts extended both to the right and left for some distance. Samples taken from the vein all along the shafts and drifts, both top and bottom, averaged over $20 per ton in free gold which could be milled easily.

This mine could be worked for a profit, so we set out to do just that. By the time we had fixed the shaft and installed timbers and a hoist, the price of gold had risen to $35 per ounce. We worked out and shipped two cars to the smelter. The profit on the two cars was enough to pay for buildings, hoist, timbers, compressor, machine, tools and a small ten-ton mill complete. We set up the mill near the mine and milled the ore. It turned out to be easily processed and the recovery was excellent. We made good money from this mine.

EVER yearning for the big strike that lies always just over the horizon, I continued to search for the silver mine and the gold mine in the desert south of Montezuma Head. I had no luck, but those two mines are still there waiting for some lucky prospector to find them. I have Chief Six's word for it and also another piece of corroborating information.

One day a young Mexican boy, about eighteen years old, came to our camp. He was riding a decrepit old burro equipped with an ancient saddle. Aside from the burro and saddle, the lad's possessions consisted of some extra clothes, a couple of blankets and several cooking utensils. He asked first for food, and then if he could camp awhile with us. He offered to pay, but after seeing his poke I refused to accept any money. Both the kid and the burro were about played out. They had journeyed a long way from the south.

The lad brightened up after a meal and a good night's rest. I asked him what he was doing up here so far from Mexico. I had a strong hunch that he was looking for the Pima or Padre Mines. My hunch paid off.

He looked at me and smiled; he knew what I was thinking. "Ah, *senor*, you suspect that I come looking for the mines. *Si*, it is true. I look for a very rich mine that my great-great-grandfather worked many years ago."

I rolled a cigarette while I thought that one over. "Look, son," I said fin-

(Continued on page 41)

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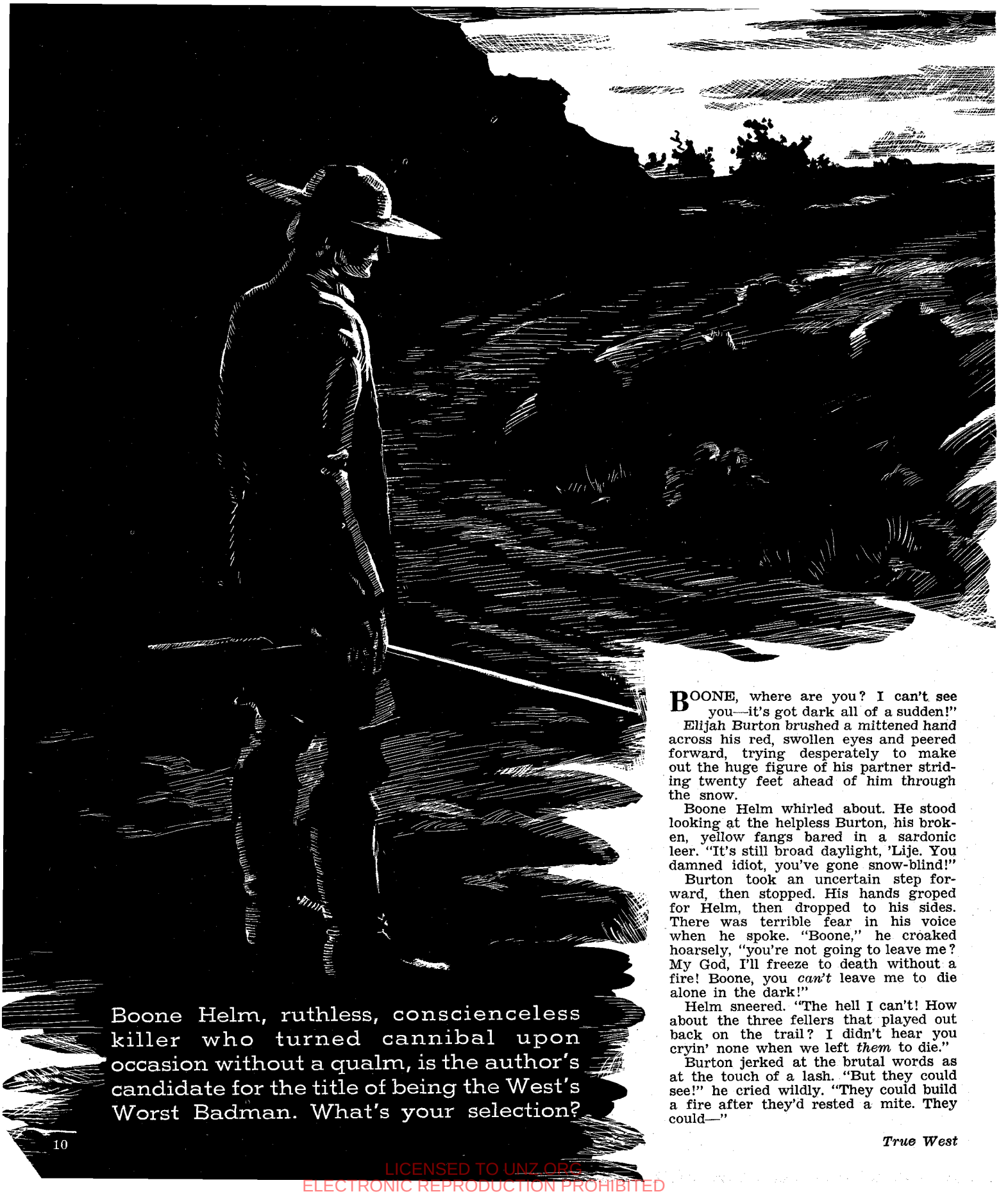

Boone Helm, ruthless, conscienceless killer who turned cannibal upon occasion without a qualm, is the author's candidate for the title of being the West's Worst Badman. What's your selection?

BOONE, where are you? I can't see you—it's got dark all of a sudden!"

Elijah Burton brushed a mittened hand across his red, swollen eyes and peered forward, trying desperately to make out the huge figure of his partner striding twenty feet ahead of him through the snow.

Boone Helm whirled about. He stood looking at the helpless Burton, his broken, yellow fangs bared in a sardonic leer. "It's still broad daylight, 'Lije. You damned idiot, you've gone snow-blind!"

Burton took an uncertain step forward, then stopped. His hands groped for Helm, then dropped to his sides. There was terrible fear in his voice when he spoke. "Boone," he croaked hoarsely, "you're not going to leave me? My God, I'll freeze to death without a fire! Boone, you *can't* leave me to die alone in the dark!"

Helm sneered. "The hell I can't! How about the three fellers that played out back on the trail? I didn't hear you cryin' none when we left *them* to die."

Burton jerked at the brutal words as at the touch of a lash. "But they could see!" he cried wildly. "They could build a fire after they'd rested a mite. They could—"

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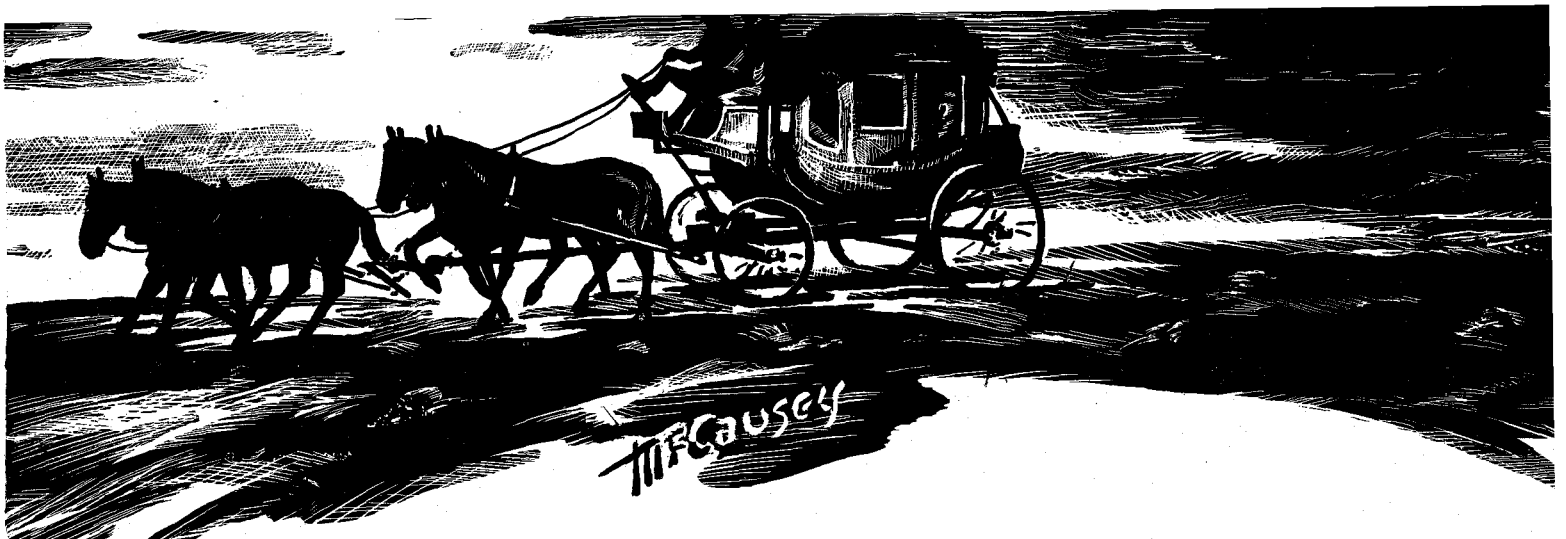

The beast that looked liked a man!

By NORMAN B. WILTSEY

Illustrated by B. J. McCausey

"Starve!" Helm cut in harshly. "You rotten, sniveling coward, you know damned well they didn't have a chance. They had no grub—*we* took it all. You and me! And now, we got no grub either."

Sobbing hysterically, Burton staggered toward the man he could no longer see. "Boone, Boone—don't leave me to freeze. We're *partners,* Boone—you can't run out on me. I can walk—just let me hang onto your coat. I can make it, Boone . . ."

Burton tripped in his snowshoes and fell. He crawled toward Helm, begging abjectly. "Give me a chance, Boone, *please* give me a chance. I don't want to die . . ."

Helm cocked his rifle—and Burton cowered in terror at the ominous click of the hammer. Helm leveled the heavy Hawken, and spoke softly and reassuringly to the trembling man. "I ain't goin' to leave you to freeze in these mountains, 'Lije—that wouldn't be humane. I'm goin' to see to it that you don't suffer a mite."

The crash of the shot echoed loud in the icy stillness, came booming back intensified from the circling cliffs.

The murderer stood motionless until the clamoring echoes faded away, watching Burton gasp out his life in the reddening snow. Deliberately, then, he stripped the corpse of its clothing and rifled the pockets. A gold watch, a few coins, he kept—a packet of letters he tore up and threw away. Drawing his Bowie knife, he began expertly to cut up the body. He worked fast and eagerly, like a hungry man butchering a beef . . .

THE grisly cannibal murder of Elijah Burton in March of 1852 was not the first killing on Boone Helm's black record. In September of the preceding year, he had stabbed his best friend in a drunken row over a woman in his home village of Log Branch, Missouri. Arrested for the brutal crime, he had broken jail and fled West to California. In the roaring gold camp of Hangtown, he shot up a gambling joint after going broke at the faro table. Nobody was hurt, but the Vigilantes gave him a choice of leaving town or rope-dancing on air. Helm left town.

A couple of months later, he showed up in the Grande Ronde Valley in eastern Oregon. Elijah Burton was seeking a guide for an expedition over the mountains to Salt Lake City, and Helm talked Burton into giving him the job.

The party was doomed from the start, with insufficient supplies and an inexperienced guide. Indians ran off their horses, killing the herder. The hard travel afoot exhausted the weaker members of the party until only Helm and Burton were left—and then only Helm was left. He arrived in Salt Lake City healthy and well-fed and still packing a chunk of meat wrapped in a filthy cotton shirt. "Elk meat," he informed a curious questioner, roaring with laughter as he tossed the meat to a dog.

Boone Helm had yet to find a community strong-stomached enough to stand him for long, and Salt Lake City was no exception. Upon his arrival in town, however, he readily found a job with a criminal outfit that specialized in carefully planned and smoothly executed holdups without violence or bloodshed beyond an occasional pistol-whipping.

The hulking killer from Missouri sneered at such squeamishness, but stayed in line until he had his empty money-belt replenished with gold eagles. Then the inevitable happened. A gambler, trying to defend his bankroll, reached for a hideout derringer in a vest pocket. Coldly, Helm shot him in the belly—and watched in vast amusement the dying agonies of the card-shark as he writhed on the floor striving to hold in his slug-torn guts with his bloody hands.

That was too callous a performance even for the hard-bitten leader of the holdup gang. Angrily, in disgust and revulsion, he cursed Helm for a rotten beast and drove him out of Salt Lake with a stern warning never to return.

DRIFTING to San Francisco, Helm got lucky at the gambling tables and ran up a hefty stake. He bought fancy new clothes, a plug hat and polished boots, and gave the sporting girls a red-hot whirl. He enjoyed the charms of one bawd in particular—a talented half-Chinese beauty called Jade. The lady's Chinese boy-friend took a dim view of the situation and attacked Boone with a hatchet one night as he emerged from Jade's room.

In the ensuing gory brawl, Helm finally slashed his assailant's throat from ear to ear after taking several superficial hatchet wounds. The Vigilantes investigated the sordid affair, decided that Helm had acted in self-defense but ordered him out of town on general principles.

Unpopular as a nervous skunk, Boone headed back for Idaho. There, in a saloon poker game at Florence, he shot and killed an unarmed man known only as Dutch Fred. Working cleverly through a conniving jailer, Helm beat the rap by bribing the jury with the last of his San Francisco winnings.

(Continued on page 39)

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The cook shacks at Glen Springs, where six troops held off nearly 300 bandits for five hours on May 5, 1916. The roof belongs to another, younger building. These buildings are now abandoned.

Tequila and Gunpowder

By WALLY GEORGE

Only forty years ago, on the Texas-Mexican border along the Rio Grande, Americans never knew when the bandidos would strike across the river. This is the story of one such raid

TEXAS, in 1916, along the Rio Grande, was a dangerous place to live. A shallow river and lonesome, the Rio Grande has never been a detriment to those who wish to cross illegally. After leaving El Paso, it winds and twists its way through 600 miles of arid mountain ranges to the lower valley, and only once, at Presidio, Texas, is it crossed by a single wooden bridge. 1916 was the big year for bandits. Mexico was a turmoil of revolution. For six years one president after another had fallen to the bandit-revolutionists. Pancho Villa, Zapata, Carranza, Huerta—all revolutionists. All bandits.

And the Rio Grande was too shallow and too lonesome to restrict the battlegrounds.

One hundred and thirty miles down the river from Presidio, in the very bottom of the lonesome Big Bend country, a small detachment of nine troops of the Fourteenth Cavalry was stationed at Glen Springs. This little establishment consisted of the nine troops, a store run by E. K. Ellis and C. G. Compton, and a *candelilla* wax plant. The plant, owned and operated by Cap Wood and Oscar Montel, distilled a crude wax from the greasy *candelilla* bush. Twenty-two miles farther down the river was Boquillas, Texas. At Boquillas was a store run by Jesse Deemer. Across the river, in the cliffs of the Del Carmen mountains, was a silver mine worked by three Americans.

The detachment of soldiers, under Sergeant Smythe, had been sent to the area

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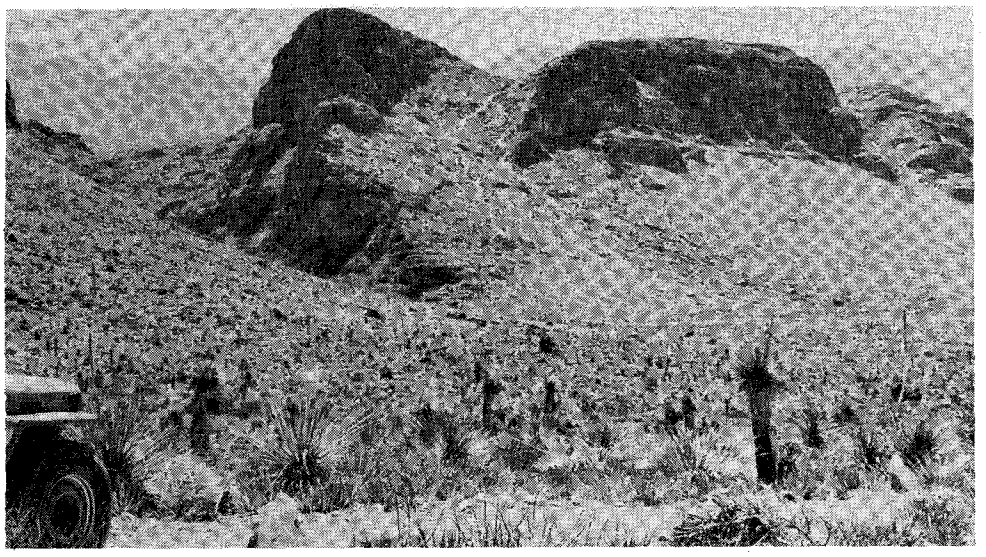


This is the trail used by the bandits in crossing the Del Carmen Mountains in Mexico. The group, lead by Rodriguez Ramirez, used this trail in traveling west from Villa Acuna, Mexico, to Glen Springs.

for protection against bandits. Sergeant Smythe considered himself about the unluckiest man alive. On that night of May 5, 1916, he bemoaned his fate.

"Fourteen years in the army, and what do I get?" he complained to Pvt. Richard Coloe. "I get stationed right in the middle of the damndest hunk of nowhere I ever seen! Glen Springs . . ." he spat.

The sergeant was not far from right. It was lousy duty. A small cluster of sun-baked adobe huts, a single store, and a stinking wax distillery comprised the lot. The nearest thing that resembled a town was Alpine—120 miles of washed-out dirt road to the north. A twelve-hour drive for a car, but all they had were horses. It was lousy duty.

AT eleven o'clock that night, C. G. Compton, clerk of the Ellis store, was brought to the door by a discreet knocking. An apologetic Mexican, hat in hand, stood in the moonlight.

"Pardon me, *señor,*" he said. "The soldiers here—how many are there?"

"Nine," said Compton. "Those are their quarters . . ." he indicated three adobe huts a hundred yards away.

The Mexican mumbled thanks and faded into the darkness. Compton, curious, closed the door and peeked out a window. Through the night outside he saw scurrying dozens of sombreroed figures, hurrying toward the soldiers' huts. A bandit attack!

When he realized what was happening, he hurried into the bedroom where his three motherless children lay sleeping. Quietly he woke them up. "Get dressed!" he whispered. Then, with his daughter, age six, he slipped out the back, leading her through the darkness to the house of a Mexican woman, a half-mile away. But before he got back after his two boys, ages four and ten, he heard the firing begin. First, a shot; then an answer, and another; then the night broke into an angry staccato of rifle-fire.

"My boys!" he whispered to himself.

He had cautioned them to stay in the darkened house and not open the door. But when the firing began, the younger one could not resist the temptation. A Mexican, taking shelter around the corner of the house, saw the door open and the small head peek out.

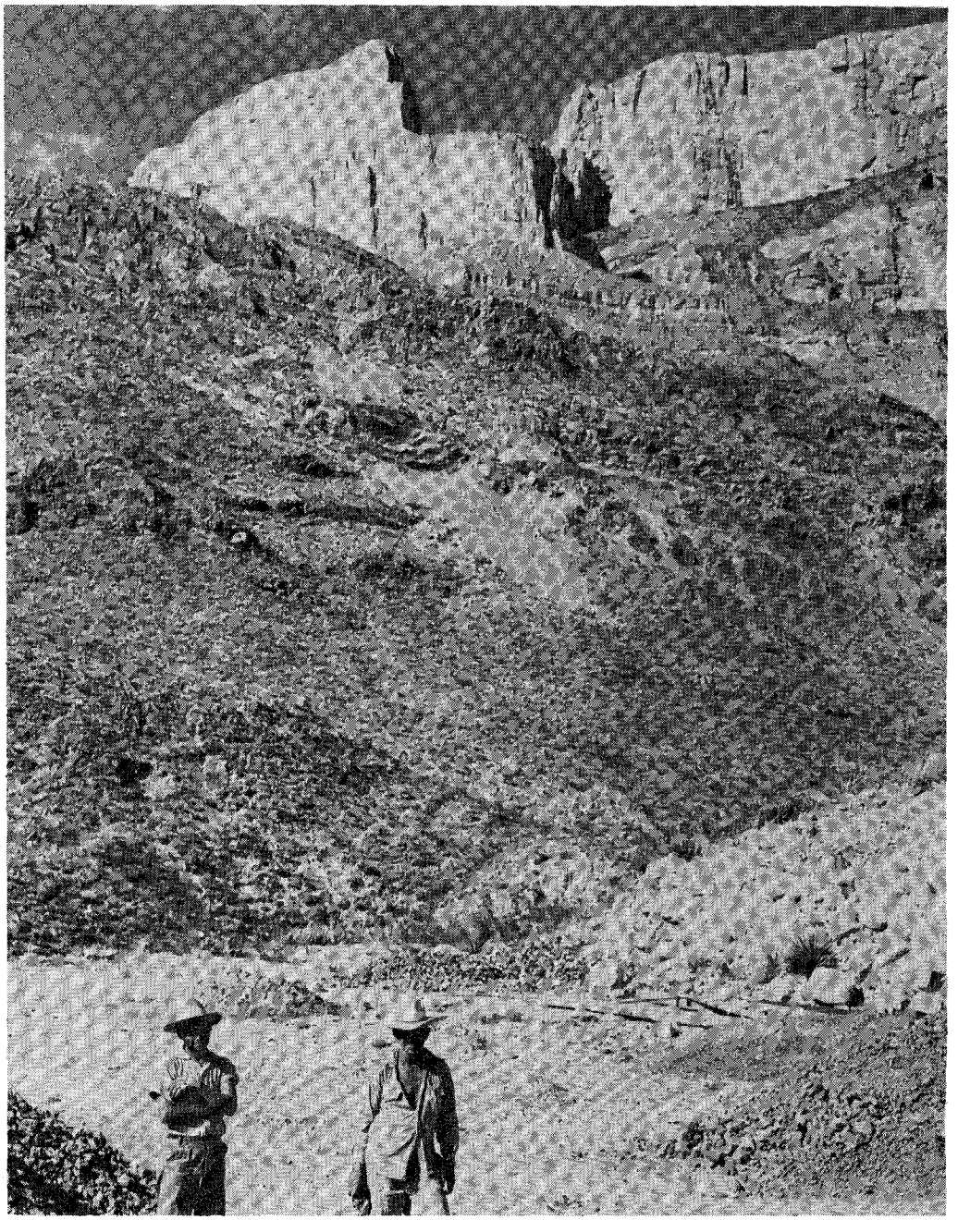
"Mueran los gringos!" screamed the Mexican, and fired. He shot off half Tommy Compton's face; then shot him again and darted over his body into the house, two other bandits behind him. From the far corner of the room, the older boy, Robert, looked at them fearfully. The bandit raised his rifle.

"No!" said one of the men who had come in with him. *"Está loco . . ."* He tapped his head warningly and indicated the child. The three Mexicans studied the child a moment, then turned and left the house.

Robert Compton was afflicted—a deaf-mute. The superstitious bandits still clung to their Indian beliefs. It is bad luck to harm one who is *loco*. The bandits—nearly two hundred of them—turned their attention to the nine soldiers.

Under Sergeant Smythe the soldiers had all reached the cook shack, a sturdy adobe building with a tin roof, covered with grass. For three hours the fight dragged on, with the soldiers—still in

(Continued on page 34)



Silver mines near Boquillas, Mexico. Here, the bandits kidnapped three American miners May 6, 1916. Mines are now worked by these two Mexicans, producing mostly lead.

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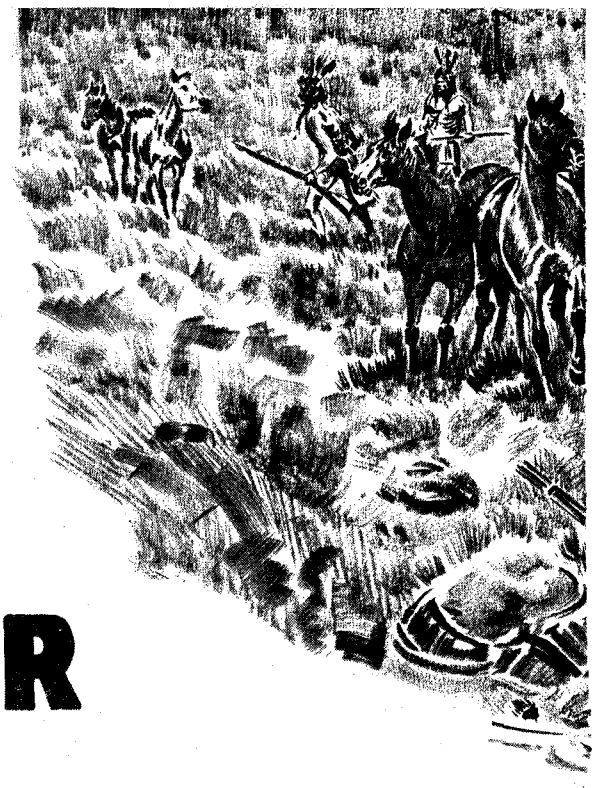
Incurable "followers of the gleam," the rugged adventurers who spend their lives seeking the earth's treasures. They suffer from man's age-old malady, the



FEVER FOR GOLD

By J. FRANK DOBIE

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

Author's Note:

The Lost Cabin Mine in the Big Horn Mountains lies in a land much less forbidding than that where Breyfogle lost his gold and his mind. Nevertheless, even after all the time passed since Custer made his Last Stand (which was also the dying stand of the Sioux Indians rightfully claiming the region), it remains a country immense, vast, and ungraspable. The story of the Lost Cabin Mine continues to belong to it and to the lost mine tradition of the West. —JFD.

ALLEN HULBERT left his quiet home in Wisconsin to join thousands of other Forty-niners bound for the roaring El Dorado on the Pacific slopes. What he found or lost over a period of fourteen years tradition does not tell. The spring of 1863 found him in Walla Walla, Washington, broke but still resolute and still following the gleam. There he fell in with two other gold-seekers named Jones and Cox.

It was the golden age of grub-staking. A doctor who couldn't leave his practice to prospect and who prudently kept his wife ignorant of his investment loaded them with a plentiful supply of powder, lead, tobacco, flour, coffee and other necessities. They owned tools and horses. With a good pack animal and a good mount apiece, they took the old Mullen Trail with the intention of prospecting on the eastern slopes of the Rockies. This was the last the grub-staking doctor ever saw of any of the three men. Their story has come down from the one named Allen Hulbert.

According to him, the three struck the Yellowstone River and then, partly by means of rafts but partly with their horses, went down it to the junction of the Big Horn River. There they made camp for a short time on an island and prospected over the surrounding mountains. The country looked good to them, though they had absolutely no knowledge of it. They found that it abounded in game and also hostile Indians. They decided to go up a range of mountains, keeping it on their right—a range that for them had neither name nor location. They traveled mostly at night, covertly prospecting and panning for gold by day.

Finally the pans showed a wonderfully rich streak, and they settled down. Timber kept them from being seen from distances while they worked. From the grass-roots edging the canyon they could get from five cents to a dollar a pan. They located definitely the main streak and sank a shaft in it only seven feet down to bed rock. The gold craze was on them. They whipsawed lumber, built a dam across the creek, put up sluice boxes, and sluiced from day-break to dark every day. They realized that they had but a few short weeks in which to work before winter would close their work. They worked frantically. Often each of the three cleaned up a hundred dollars worth of gold a day. By the time the water froze, each had almost half a bushel of nuggets and gold dust.

During these operations they had not been unmindful of the Indians; yet not one came into the gulch. Every few days they would make a wide circle, cutting for Indian sign, and then, with the territory apparently clear, kill deer or elk. They were living mostly on meat, conserving their flour—for they were determined to spend the winter at the site of the bonanza and take out yet more of the gold before making for civilization.

WITH the coming of winter they threw up a log cabin, surrounding it with a stockade—the cabin that was to become a name to lure men for generations, perhaps centuries, to come. At places protected from snow, they cut hay for their horses, which they kept within the stockade. As winter became harder and the hay ran short, they peeled cottonwood logs for horse provender. The Sioux, the Blackfeet, the Cheyenne and other tribes of the Northwest did not wander about the Big Horns during the ice and snows of bleak winter. For Hulbert and his partners the winter passed in safety.

They ran out of tobacco, coffee, sugar and flour, but liver is an old substitute for bread and many men of the Rockies went for months on a meat diet alone. For Hulbert and Cox and Jones there was the gold to sustain their morale. On days when they were housed up by bitter weather, they ran their hands through their gatherings and talked of ways of spending it. As spring came and the ice showed signs of unlocking the water, they strained with impatience to gather more gold.

One warm night the ice broke. The next morning they were sluicing, and the yield was as bounteous as ever. If they had sworn during the months of confinement that they would leave as soon as the passes were open, they now gladly postponed all ideas of leaving. When a man is looking for gold there can be nothing like grasping it in his hand and pouring it into a sack.

After they had met with rich success for a number of days, Allen Hulbert one morning started back from the sluice boxes to the cabin for some purpose. On the way back he heard shots and yells. He ran back a little distance to a

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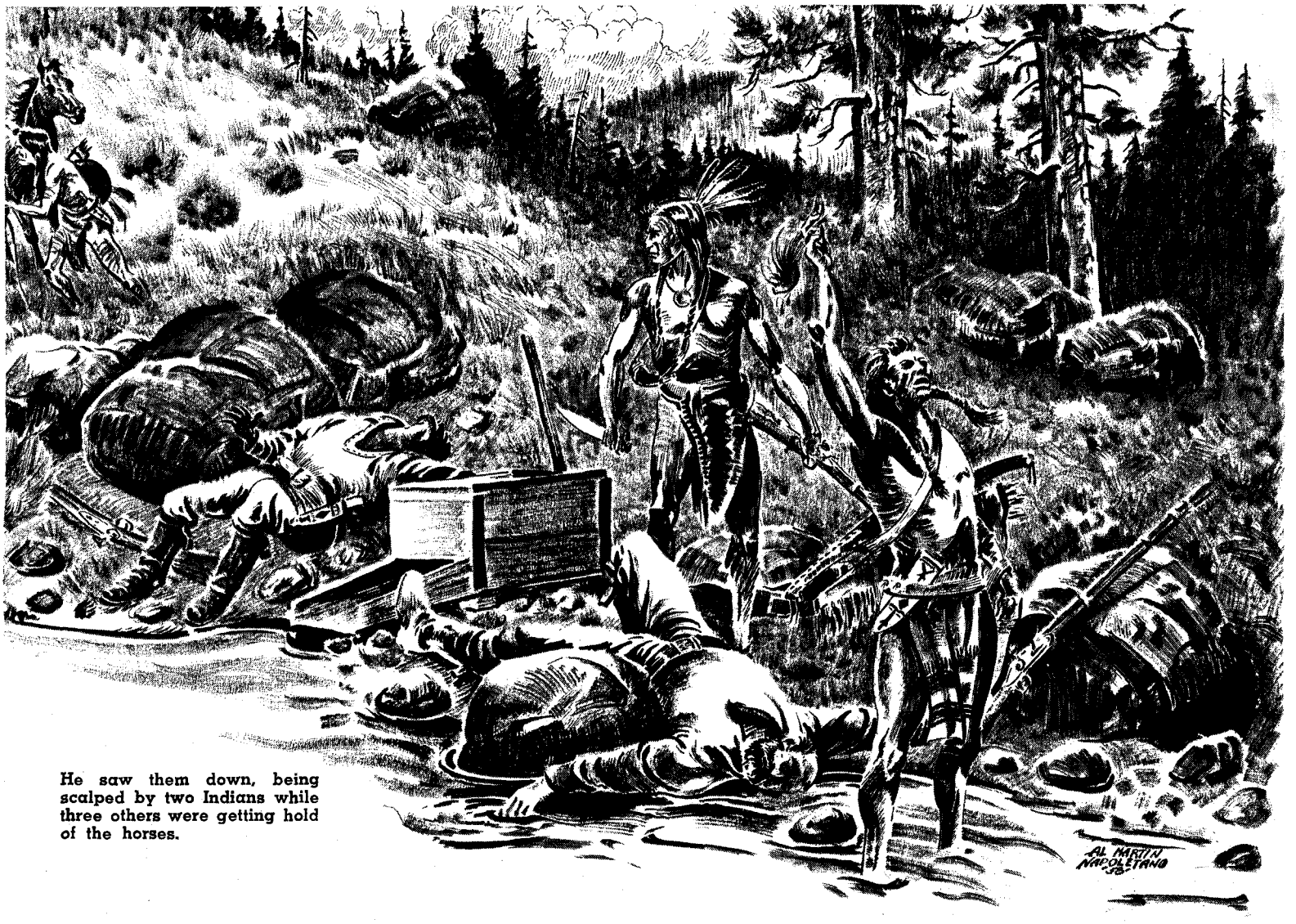

He saw them down, being scalped by two Indians while three others were getting hold of the horses.

point where, in concealment, he could look upon the spot at which he had left his partners. He saw them down, being scalped by two Indians while three others were getting hold of the horses, hobbled on grass not far away. Apparently the Indians had not discovered the cabin, which was some little distance upstream amid trees.

Hulbert rushed to it. He grabbed his gun and a supply of ammunition. Then into his war-bag, or knapsack, he stuffed as much of the gold as he thought he could carry, also some jerked meat, and stole away. The preparations took him hardly more than three minutes. The Indians, he was sure, would find the cabin before they left the vicinity. Looking back some time later from the well-covered mountain on which he had taken refuge, he saw smoke. He supposed it was from the burning cabin and stockade.

Cautiously, Hulbert traveled southward. He carried his gold, but he was naturally in a state of great excitement and he afterward admitted to having made no mental note of the lay of the land. He knew that if he went far enough south he would strike the road to California he had traveled fifteen years before and would find safety and food from travelers on it. Hulbert did not have a wilderness-sharpened mind like that of Jim Bridger and many another Mountain Man who, once having looked upon a mountain peak or a mountain pass, would remember it as accurately as if it were engraved on a relief map and would ever afterwards recognize that feature of the landscape no matter from what direction approached.

HULBERT traveled more by night than by day. After eighteen days he came to the crossing on the Platte River known as Reshaw's, about three miles from where Casper, Wyoming, now stands. Here he met the first white man, excepting his dead partners, he had seen since leaving Walla Walla more than a year before. The party he struck was madly pushing for Alder Gulch in Montana, where a great strike had just been made—the richest gold placer diggings, it is said now, ever discovered in the world. The whole country, it seemed, was stampeding to Alder Gulch. Hulbert joined the stampede and turned back northward.

He was so sure of his own mine, however, that he could see no reason for seeking another, if he only had power to stand off the Indians. He talked to a few individuals—all gold mad—about what he knew. He showed the gold in his war-bag. Finally a considerable party agreed to join him and to follow his leadership. He had never been a leader of men; he could not lead these. When he vacillated in his directions and they became aware of his exceedingly uncertain knowledge of geography, they rebelled. He admitted that he was lost and did not know where the mine was. He was on the point of being lynched when a solitary man with decisiveness and a six-shooter saved him. The gold seekers went on to Alder Gulch, cursing at the delay, and Hulbert went with them.

The camp at Alder Gulch took the name of Virginia City—not to be confused with the Virginia City of Nevada, where Breyfogle had been. Here, in Virginia City, Montana, Hulbert was last seen in the fall of 1864. He still had most of his gold, for he was not a reckless dissipator of it like miners in general. Many men saw the gold and believed his story. Whether he left alone or in company to search for it is not known. At any rate he disappeared, never to return.

The Big Horn Mountains were then, and for several years continued to be, infested by the most warlike of Indians in the most savage of moods. Nevertheless, in the following spring of 1865, well-equipped parties began to go out in search of the Lost Cabin Mine, as the place where Hulbert struck his gold now came to be called. One of the searchers was old Pancake, discoverer of the Comstock Lode.

The Indians of the Big Horns had, according to tradition, long known of rich deposits of gold in their territory. Black Robe, as they called their noted missionary Father DeSmet, claimed that he had learned from them the location of gold; but because he knew the opening of mines would be "the sorrow and ruin of our poor Indians" he refused to pursue the matter. Granting that the story Hulbert told be true, it is likely that the

(Continued on page 33)

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Bought from her Apache captors by a Mohave chieftain, the Mormon girl, Olive Oatman, lived for five years as

Wife of the Chief

Olive Oatman, showing the Indian tattoo marks on her chin that symbolize her marriage to the chief.

WHIPS cracked over the oxen teams and the wagon wheels creaked. Children shouted in glee as the wagon train began to move. The party of Mormon emigrants, which had been assembling at Independence, Missouri, for the past week, was at last moving out of town along the Santa Fe Trail. Twenty covered wagons, fifty pioneers, and a herd of cattle—bellowing under the hot August sun—comprised the train.

Four miles southwest of the Last Chance Saloon, the wagon boss blew his ram's horn to order an encampment. It was the Mormons' first stop on the long, dangerous route that led across the Great Plains, the mountains and the high-flung mesas. The Latter Day Saints were aiming to found a colony down in New Mexico Territory.

They had been told grim tales of the Indians, fiercely painted and tattooed, who lay in wait for unwary pioneers along the trail—but if anyone feared them, it was not Royce Oatman. The moon-faced, black-bearded Oatman had met many Indians in his time and had invariably found them friendly. "Treat them well and they won't harm you," was his kindly philosophy. So far it had worked.

Oatman, a prosperous Illinois farmer of forty-one, disliked the northern winters. That was why he had sold out for $1,500 and taken his wife Mary, with their seven children, a horse and a number of cows and a Conestoga wagon on the long trek to the sunny land where winter never comes.

That first night on the Santa Fe Trail in 1850 the twenty wagons formed a hollow square as a corral for the animals. Every member of the party old enough worked to prepare the camp for the night. Oatman chopped wood. His four oldest children—Lucy, seventeen; Lorenzo, not quite fifteen; Olive, thirteen, and Mary Ann, seven—kept busy herding cattle grazing outside the wagon enclosure, gathering wood for the campfires, toting pails of water from the Kansas River and minding the three youngest children, while their mother cooked the simple evening meal of beef and beans.

By FREEMAN H. HUBBARD

After holding a prayer meeting and posting guards, the men not on duty bedded down under the wagons. Only the yapping of coyotes broke the stillness of the vast sea of buffalo grass stretching about them on all sides. A full moon marched across the sky, and at sunup the Saints hit the trail again.

The caravan started off eagerly enough, but the grueling months of travel brought hunger, sickness and discord. Bitter arguments cropped up as to the best region in which to settle. At Santa Fe Pass the wagon train split up, most of the disgruntled party turning northwest. Oatman resolutely kept his wagon headed in a southwesterly direction, and a few wagons stayed with him. However, these few companions dropped off later at a Pima Indian village.

After that, the nine Oatmans pushed on alone. The going had become rough. Their team, a yoke of oxen and two yokes of cows, had become galled, gaunt and nearly exhausted. Their other cattle had long since been stolen by the Indians, their only horse had died, and their food supply was nearly gone.

THE spring of 1851 found them on the Rio Grande-Gila Trail. They spent the night of April 17 marooned on a sandbar in the Gila River, seventy or eighty miles east of Fort Yuma. The children spoke in low tones about savages who might be lurking nearby in the darkness, ready to murder them all.

"If they ever attack us," said Olive, "they'll never take me alive. I'd kill myself first!"

"Hush, dear," soothed her older sister. "The Indians aren't going to attack us."

The night was dreary for the tired travelers. Oatman sat pondering the desperate situation until their small

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campfire burned into ashes, then turned in. His wife, glancing at his set face, was silent.

Shortly after daybreak they were on their way. At the opposite shore of the river, the wornout team balked at dragging the heavily loaded wagon up the high embankment.

"Unload the stuff," Oatman wearily ordered. "We'll have to lug it up the slope a piece at a time."

This they did; then goaded the two oxen and four cows into hauling the empty wagon to the summit of the two hundred foot slope. Oatman's drawn face streamed perspiration when they reached the top. His wife noted with concern how tired and old he looked.

The family sat down to rest beside the wagon. Mrs. Oatman held the baby on her lap and crooned a lullaby to the fretful infant. All about was barren country, with not a blade of grass nor a green leaf to remind them of the verdant Illinois farm they had left nearly a year before. No wisp of smoke curled up from a friendly habitation for as far as the eye could reach. Mrs. Oatman could not repress a shiver as she looked out upon the vast, lonely expanse. The empty wilderness seemed to weigh upon her with a feeling of sinister foreboding.

Below them ran the whispering, muddy river. To the south lay purplish table lands and deep, dark canyons. To east and west, serrated mountain ranges lifted their jagged peaks against a molten coppery sky. Before them stretched the endless, dusty, stony trail to their new home. *Would they ever reach it?* wondered Mrs. Oatman.

The sun had begun to set on this bleak landscape. Oatman was reloading the wagon, when Olive's keen eyes caught sight of dusky figures approaching.

"Papa," she said quickly, "look at the Indians!"

He stiffened at sight of the crouching, trotting figures, but said reassuringly, "Don't be afraid. They won't harm us."

Olive silently counted nineteen braves. They wore no garb except wolf skins around their loins, and all had daubs of paint and tattoo marks on the face and arms.

"Apaches!" muttered Oatman. He stepped out before his family to meet the approaching Indians.

Knowing that many Southwestern tribes could speak Spanish, he greeted them in that language. He took his corncob pipe from his pocket, loaded it with tobacco, lit it, took a puff, and passed it to the Apaches. Each Indian puffed on the pipe, an indication that they came in peace. One brave, evidently a chief, asked for food.

Oatman shook his head. "Sorry, *amigos,*" he said in Spanish, "our food is nearly gone. Not enough for family. We are nearly starving."

"Food!" the chief repeated angrily.

Oatman hesitated; then gave each brave a piece of bread. They wolfed it, called for more, and peered into the wagon.

"No more," said the Mormon, trying to be patient. "I can't take food from my own family."

The Apaches grunted, stalked off a short distance, and went into a huddle. Oatman resumed reloading the wagon. He did not reach for the rifle, lying behind the high seat, knowing that one man with a gun could do little toward holding off nineteen Indians if they decided to attack.

Suddenly the Indians whooped shrilly and raced toward the emigrant family, brandishing tomahawks previously concealed in their wolf skins. The murderous job was quickly finished. Only Olive and Mary Ann were shoved aside and saved.

YEARS later, Olive recalled the scene of horror in these words:

"There was blood everywhere. I saw my dear father struggling and moaning. Lucy, my oldest sister, lay with her face in the dust. Lorenzo tried to rise, fell down again, and lay still. I saw my beloved mother flat on the ground, clasping the baby in her arms. Neither of them was moving. Little Mary Ann stood beside me, covering her face with both hands and sobbing out loud, and an Indian was bending over her. The rest of the family were dead or dying. Then I fainted."

When Olive came to, she made a frantic effort to reach her mother. Strong arms held her back. At that time Olive, but not Mary Ann, was wearing shoes. The Apaches removed the older girl's shoes and stripped her of all clothing except a petticoat. Olive fought like a wildcat to keep her dress, but the warriors only laughed at her modesty.

Mary Ann cried hysterically for her mother. Forgetting for the moment her own terror and shame, Olive put both arms around the frightened seven-year-old child and held her tightly to her breast.

"Mamma has gone to Heaven," she whispered. "I will take care of you, darling. Don't cry."

Dazed, the girls watched the Apaches loot their wagon, the only home they had known for almost a year. The Indians took the Oatmans' pitifully small food supply and other items that caught their fancy, robbed the dead and dying of shoes, and destroyed all other household articles. They ripped the feather bed open and flung handfulls of feathers to the wind. Finally they wrecked the wagon, first tearing the canvas from its wooden frame, and then pushing the vehicle down the steep embankment into the river. The havoc was complete.

"Vamos!" barked the Apache leader. The warriors filed down hill in the deepening dusk, laden with plunder and driving along with them the two Mormon girls, the yoke of oxen and the four scrawny cows.

Fording the shallow river, they headed north. Around midnight they halted, built a fire with flint and steel and wild cotton carried for that purpose, and cooked some of the beans they had taken from the Oatmans. Soon they were on the march again.

Single-file, they threaded their way through a rocky gorge. The girls, slipping and stumbling, cut their bare feet on sharp stones and cried out repeatedly. Blows from the flat side of tomahawks kept them moving. At length Mary Ann, never a strong child, fell down and refused to rise. One of the Indians handed his bundle of booty to a companion, picked up the thin little girl and carried her on his back.

On the third day they came to an Apache village in a valley. Other members of the tribe greeted the warriors like returning heroes, with shouts and songs, wild dancing and the music of drums and reed flutes.

Olive and Mary were utterly exhausted. Even the strange community of wickiups—mound-shaped lodges made of skins stretched over wooden frames—was a welcome relief from their tortuous journey. They were pushed inside one of the wickiups and allowed to sleep until they awakened.

The region was mountainous, with no grass or timber; no fuel except widely scattered sagebrush. There were no creeks or rivers; the Indians depended

(Continued on page 37)

The massacre of Olive Oatman's family by Apache Indians as drawn from Olive's own description. This drawing is from a book published in 1859 that related the incredible adventures of the courageous young Mormon girl.

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My father trailed the leader by a great distance, the course was muddy from the heavy rains that day. He knew it would take a desperate gamble if he was to have a chance at winning the

HARNESS RACE

By WALT COBURN

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THE annual harness race, matched between my father's team and the teams of my brothers Bob, Will and Wallace, from the home ranch to the cow town of Malta, had been a tradition as far back as I could remember.

Each one of the men would put up a thousand dollars, winner take all. Every man on the ranch and the town citizens bet money each year that ran into a considerable amount.

That yearly harness race at the Circle C had become a sort of celebration that called for a holiday.

The first year that I was allowed to go along on the race, my brother Wallace was in Helena and would not be able to enter.

The day before the race I looked the horses over while I grained them in their stalls. There was little difference in their breeding and conformation. My father's Tucker bays (Nip and Tuck), Bob's Lewis and Clark—each bald-faced, stocking-legged chestnuts, and Will's seal-brown Roulette and Faro, each horse was sound as a dollar, sleek and beautiful, without a blemish, each conditioned for the long, gruelling, forty-five mile road race the next day.

Father's new top buggy had arrived a few days ago. It had been made to order by an Eastern firm, with every piece of wood carefully selected. The top and dashboard were of solid leather the color of gun metal, a special leather that wouldn't crack as it weathered. The tires were hard rubber instead of iron, and the hardwood wheels varnished to bring out the grain.

The next day, I remembered something Old Tom had told me a while back as he worked on Big Ned's feet: that a lot of horse races had been won or lost according to the condition of a horse's hoofs. So I went into the stall with Nip and Tuck, and lifting each hoof between my knees, I cleaned out the dirt and manure with a hoof pick. "Don't give us any alibis about pulling up lame," I told the Tucker bays as I slapped them on the rumps.

I knew if my father had seen me he would have ordered me out of the stall, but I'd been making up to Nip and Tuck when nobody had been around.

Meanwhile, Frank Howe and Joe Contway helped Will and Bob hook their teams to the buggies. Humpy Jack Davis and Pete Olsen held the horses' heads till Bob and Will got into the rigs.

Brewster and I held the Tucker bays while father climbed into the buggy seat and got a grip on the reins. Then I let go of Nip's bridle and scrambled over the front wheel into the seat beside my father.

Every man on the ranch was there to watch the start. When the three buggies were lined up, my father called out in a loud voice, "Turn loose! Let's go!"

WE were off in a cloud of dust, the three rigs all but hub to hub for a short distance. Then father let Bob and Will pull ahead to fight it out between them to see who would get to the one-way road first. It was like a three team runaway for a short while, every man for himself, and all were out for blood.

Bob cut in on two wheels and got the road by a narrow margin, almost piling the two buggies in a bad wreck. By the time we crossed Little Warm bridge, five miles from the starting line, the Tucker bays were a half mile behind in the dust.

"It's the last five miles that count," my father chuckled as he held his team down to a steady road trot.

It had been trying to rain for two weeks or more. The late July night had been sultry, and now the black thunderheads piled up behind the twin buttes were rumbling and sheet lightning smeared the heavy sky behind the Little Rockies.

We were nearing the halfway station called the Hog Ranch, when the storm hit. The whole sky, that had hung low overhead like an enormous black sack filled with water, let out a Noah's Ark flood. One minute the road ahead was filled with heavy dust, a minute later the deep wagon ruts were running muddy water. For a while we had to squint our eyes half shut to see the ears of the team as the wind whipped the rain against us.

My father wore a pair of new overalls over his suit pants to keep the dust off. I knew they would look like they had been left overnight in a tub of blueing when the dye ran. His white mustache and beard were wet, and before long he would look like the well-digger McGinty after he had just climbed up the well rope. I was getting plenty damp myself. The low sod-roofed log buildings of the Hog Ranch stage station loomed up ahead. Beyond Hog Ranch lay a mile or more of road known as the Red Lane, because of its red gumbo clay. In rainy weather it was the boggiest strip of road that ever mired a wagon to the hubs.

Charlie Whitcomb, a mining man and close friend of the family, was standing in the saloon doorway as we drove past to the log barn.

"Jump out and tie up the horses' tails," father told me. "And step lively."

With the help of the stock tender, who came out of the barn to lend a hand, we braided each tail in three plaits, then twisted the braid up and around and knotted it above the hocks so it couldn't come loose. It was a makeshift job but it would do to keep the long tails from balling up with sticky gumbo.

Whitcomb came over wearing a slicker, which he took off and made my fa-

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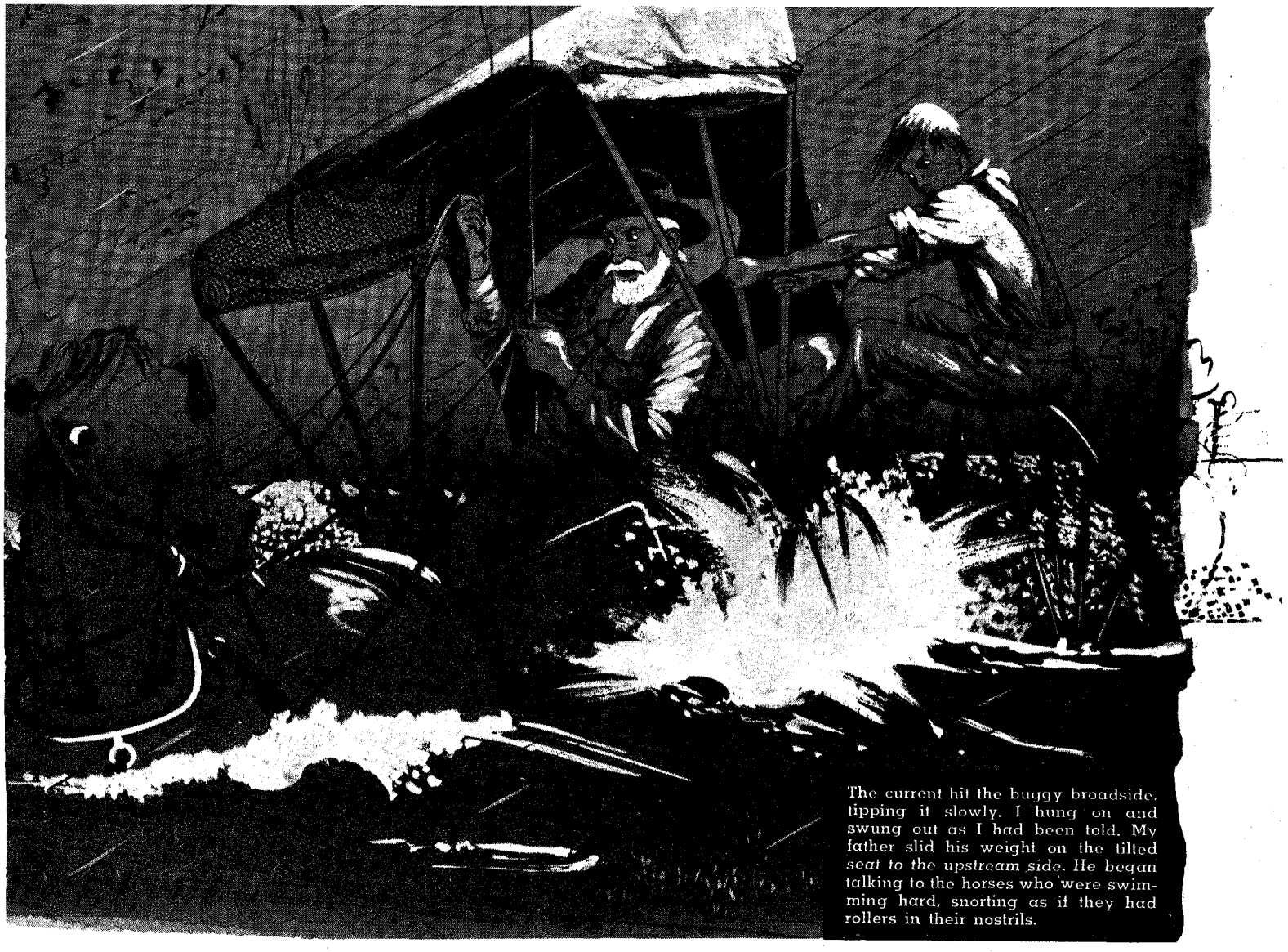

The current hit the buggy broadside, tipping it slowly. I hung on and swung out as I had been told. My father slid his weight on the tilted seat to the upstream side. He began talking to the horses who were swimming hard, snorting as if they had rollers in their nostrils.

Illustrated by Francis C. Hannon

ther put on. He took a silver-cased stop watch from his vest pocket and said, "Bob's seven minutes and twenty seconds in the lead. You're five minutes and forty-two seconds behind Will."

"You got any money down, Charlie?" father asked.

"Five hundred on Bob," Whitcomb grinned, then said, "That cloudburst caught Bob's rig at the far end of the Red Lane ahead. Will's team was caught in the broad middle, far enough in so he couldn't turn around, and they're sloggin' through the gumbo hock deep." Whitcomb shrugged his bulky shoulders and made a sort of hopeless gesture with his hands.

"With a mile of red gumbo churned up like it is, you'll bog that bay team down to the ears. That cloudburst throwed you the race, Mr. Coburn. From the Red Lane to Malta it'll be a matched race between Bob and Will, if Will gets through."

"Wipe the grin off your face, Whitcomb," father snapped. "I got five hundred that says the Tucker bays get my rig to Malta in the lead. Money talks the only language in a hoss race," he snapped, blue sparks glinting in his eyes.

I gave the tied-up tails a final yank to make sure they were tight and scrambled back into the buggy as father backed the team.

"It's a bet!" Whitcomb called out as the front wheels cramped in a tight turn.

THE rain had let up enough to see the length of muddy red gumbo ahead, the ditches on each side filled with water. A rig had to stay in the ruts or tip over into six feet of water. With Will's rig crawling the ruts ahead it seemed worse than hopeless for us to tackle it. The rain closed in like a gray blanket now.

Without saying a word, my father swung Nip and Tuck off the road just before we reached the Red Lane, and headed across country, twisting between clumps of brush. I got busy and buckled down the side curtains.

"Five miles," my father said as if talking to himself. "About five miles around. We'll give them that for boot. Hit the gravel crossing on Wild Horse Creek. It'll be touch and go. Wild Horse will flood its banks directly and we got to race against time." The buggy whip hissed a foot or so above the team and they lengthened out, the rig bouncing.

"Take a look in the jockey box," my father told me. "See what's there that can be used to cut a wire fence."

I found an old pair of long-handled nippers used to trim horses' hoofs, and when we came to B. D. Phillips' sheep fence near the crossing on Wild Horse, I jumped out and cut the wire close to the posts. It was a five-strand fence of twisted barbwire and it took all my strength to do the cutting.

When I climbed back in, my father had taken off his slicker. He told me to roll up the side curtains.

He pulled up at the edge of a thirty-foot stretch of muddy water running bank to bank, and I walked out along the wagon tongue to release the check reins, talking to Nip and Tuck as I crept forward, a hand on each horse's back.

Swimming a stream in a top buggy was a new experience for me. I learned to swim the Missouri River when I was so high and I had no fear for myself. But I was afraid for my father, for I knew he couldn't swim a stroke.

"Stay on your side of the seat," father instructed me. "Hang onto the side brace. The buggy will tip sideways when

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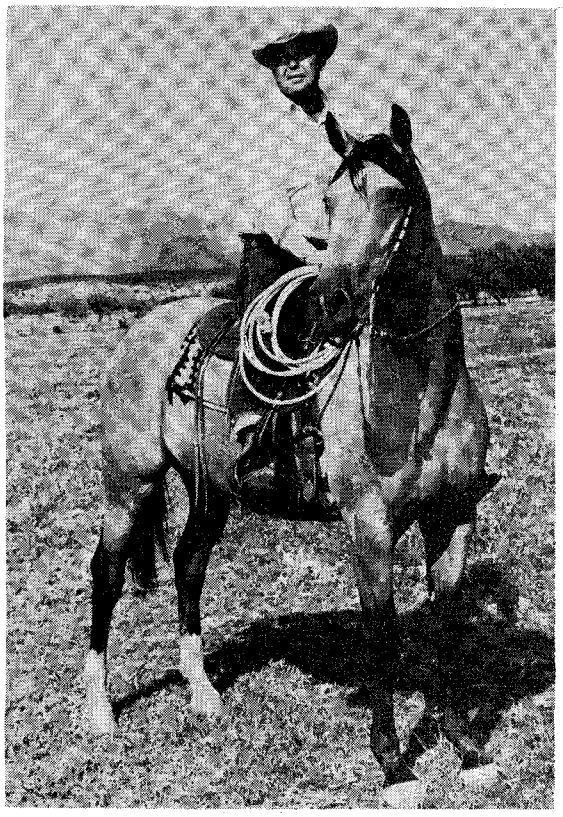

Walt Coburn was born at White Springs, Montana, in 1889. In the summers he rode his father's Circle C range in Montana. He had but one idea during these years—to become a top cowhand. In 1916, Walt drifted to Arizona and since World War II he has been writing and today is considered among the top adult-western writers.

we reach swimming water, so lean out as far as you can. If we turn over, let go and strike out for shore. You'll be on your own. I'll have my hands full with the team."

I looked at him and asked, "Can you swim?"

"You don't need to swim if you know how to handle a team in water," he said. He brought the whip down across the rumps of both horses' standing stiff-legged, reluctant to take the swift-running water. Now they snorted and hit the collars and lunged belly-deep.

THE current hit the buggy broadside, tipping it slowly. I hung on and swung out as I had been told. My father slid his weight on the tilted seat to the upstream side and the buggy came back slowly on even keel. He began talking to the horses who were swimming hard, snorting as if they had rollers in their nostrils. "Steady . . . steady now . . . steady boys . . ." There was no fear in his calm, even-toned voice as he handled the reins gently, knowing that a horse will come over backwards in swimming water if there is any hard pull on his mouth.

A few minutes later the horses struck gravel and dug in, hauling the buggy up the slant on the far bank. When the rig was on solid ground, we pulled up, to wind the horses.

I walked out on the tongue again to fasten the check reins while father was making up his mind whether to go back to the road or cut across country some more.

"We'll head straight across," he made his decision aloud. And we were off again, bouncing over brush and boulders, down cutbanks and up slants.

We were a good fifteen miles or more from Malta and we had gone five miles out of our way. That five miles had used up time, but we were still in the race.

The rain had cooled out the grain-fed bays and in spite of the heavy going, they reached out for all they had when we got back on the road.

I kept watching ahead to catch sight of the other two rigs, but after an hour and no sign of them I started getting worried. By the time we reached West Alkali bridge I gave up all hope of overtaking them. I began to feel the chill of my wet clothes and my teeth were chattering. I could tell my father was bone cold by the pinched look on his face, but he never let on.

We were within five miles of Malta when we sighted a rig ahead. "There's one of 'em," I shouted. "Half a mile ahead."

"We'll take care of that half mile, directly." My father clucked at the team and shook out the lines a little and the bays lengthened their stride. "It ain't time to ask 'em yet," he said. "Watch their tails."

There was a two mile stretch of road across a wide flat strip of benchland. I watched the tied-up tails that father said were sure indicators of whatever reserve strength was left in a horse on a gruelling trip. If the tails had been tied to short broomsticks they couldn't have been straighter.

The Tucker bays sighted the rig ahead as quickly as we had. I swear those two horses looked at each other and swapped a couple of words of horse talk, because they let out another notch of their own accord. I heard my father chuckle as he looked to see if I'd noticed. I tried to get a grin on my face, but if it was as mud-spattered as his, it must have looked like a cracked mud pie.

The buggy ahead was Will's. As we came up even I saw the red smear in his thick black hair and the blood on his face. One side of the buggy looked caved in, both side curtains had been ripped off, and a ragged hole showed in the patent leather top. Roulette and Faro's brown coats were mud spattered, the buggy plastered with sticky gumbo. and Will looked like he had taken a mud bath.

"Schoolhouse Coulee bridge washed out from under me!" he yelled as he reined off the road to let us pass. "Bob's somewhere ahead! Pass him and I'll buy you a chicken dinner!" He waved the buggy whip in salute as we showered him with muddy water from a big puddle in the middle of the road.

As we rounded a bend in the road within a mile of town, we sighted Bob's rig. We had a fifty-yard gap to close and button up fast. My father reached for the whip.

"HAH! Hah! Hah!" The short words barked at the team with a startling sound like dry sticks snapping. It was as if he had jabbed them with a prod pole.

Bob couldn't see us coming because his rear window was mud-plastered and he was too busy getting the last licks out of Lewis and Clark.

There was a straightway hundred yards of sagebrush flat ahead and beyond that two pasture fences made a narrow lane. We had to beat Bob to the lane, so father quit the road and took to the brush.

"Hah, hah!" The Tucker bays reached out, the buggy bouncing and jolting on three wheels, tipping sideways with two wheels spinning in the air, then bouncing back on all four wheels.

The two teams were neck and neck—Bob not giving an inch of the muddy road as he laid the whip across the rumps of the mud-covered chestnut team.

"Make your bid," father's voice sounded in my ear. "Ask 'em! Ask 'em!"

"Nip!" I hollered. "Tuck! Pick 'em up!" I let out an Indian yip and almost bit off my tongue as the rig bounced over a clump of brush. We were past Bob's rig and coming to the narrow lane. I cut a quick look back as father reined onto the road and saw Bob pull on the lines to keep from piling up. In the distance Will's rig seemed to be gaining ground fast.

Nip and Tuck were wide open now. The rear wheel on my side grazed the corner post as we passed into the lane.

A quarter mile ahead was the cow town of Malta. Two rain-washed, red brick, two-story buildings loomed up. They were the Great Northern Hotel and Trafton's Store that marked the finish line. The wide dirt street was a mud puddle lake.

It was that last quarter mile, the final lap of the grueling forty-five mile harness race, that would tell the tale. The only difference between the three buggy teams, almost identical in conformation, with equal breeding and pedigreed bloodline, was the proverbial difference of opinion that makes for a matched race.

Will's Roulette and Faro had crept up on Bob's Lewis and Clark sorrels. Father's Tucker bays were no more than a buggy length ahead when we came into the homestretch. It was still any man's race, and this was the supreme test of game-hearted horses and skilled drivers.

The three rigs hit that last hundred yard stretch of muddy water wide open.

It looked like every man in Malta was in the milling crowd that shoved and elbowed on the wide plank walks on either side of the street, heedless of the drizzle. And each man must have had a bet down the way everyone hollered and yelled at the tops of his lungs, to bring in the team he had bet on. The roar of the milling crowd swelled up and came at us like rolling thunder.

The westbound had just pulled in at the crossing. The train crew must have seen what was going on, for the wail of the locomotive whistle and the clang of the engine bell added to the din.

THE three rigs were abreast now, almost hub to hub on the wide street; less than a hundred yards to go. Mud chunks and water sprayed out on all sides. The mud coating made the horses all one color. The buggies and drivers were mud-splattered. Horses and rigs and men last identity. This was it; the final test.

My father's loud shout lifted above the confusion of noise. "Hah! Hah! Hah!" The long black buggy whip whistled a warning a foot above the wet backs of the team, back and forth, back and forth, as it slashed the drizzle, the water almost hub-deep.

The Tucker bays reached out, every muscle, every tendon strained to the utmost, giving the last of the strength that was rock-bottom reserve, racing their hearts out. *(Continued on page 48)*

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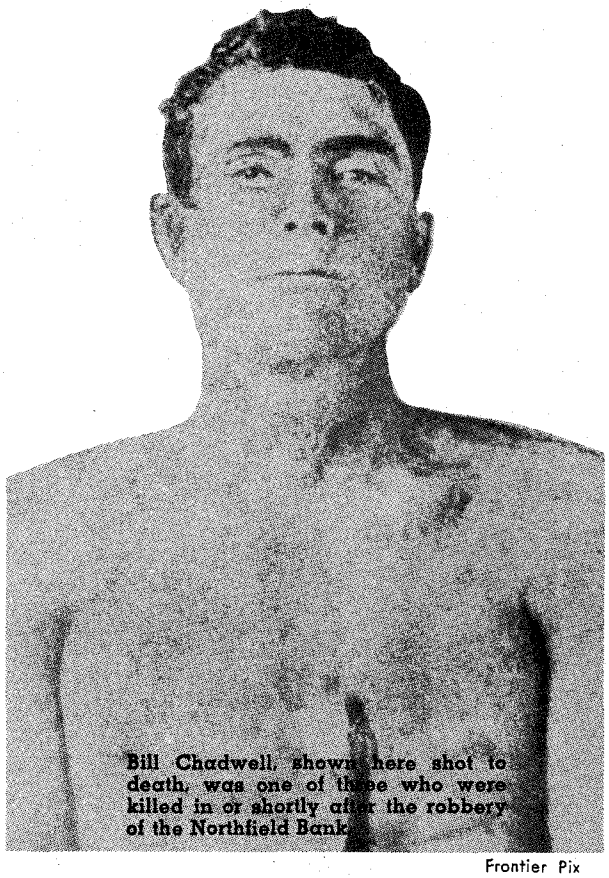
In front of Northfield Bank, blazing guns brought down a

"Hardened Criminal"

By B. L. GEHRMAN



Bill Chadwell, shown here shot to death, was one of those who were killed in or shortly after the robbery of the Northfield Bank.

Frontier Pix

UNTIL he was nearly grown, Bill Chadwell wasn't any different, apparently, from any other Missouri or Minnesota farm boy. He milked his papa's cows, cut wood, plowed corn, hoed potatoes, and now and then sneaked off from work to engage in some boyish deviltry, for which he got a good razor-strop thrashing from Papa Chadwell to "learn him better."

Then in the summer of 1876, the year that young Bill Chadwell turned nineteen, a change took place. This started with the coming of a man named Charlie Pitts, who claimed he'd ridden up from Texas in search of some new cattle range.

Pitts was the sort of man that all farm boys of that time dreamed of becoming. There was a flash and a dash to him. He could handle any sort of horse, regardless of whether or not it had ever been ridden before. He was good with a rifle or six-gun; he had a bold eye for the women, a friendly grin for the men, and mighty little to say.

While Pitts waited for the arrival of his boss, "a big Texas cowman," he entertained the neighborhood boys and anybody else who cared to watch. He'd set up a target, spur his mount past it, and score a bullseye with every shot. He'd pitch his hat out on the ground and make a run at it, picking it up without ever leaving his saddle. He'd crawl down under the belly and up the other side of a hard-running horse and never cause the animal to break his stride. And, best of all, he'd go to all sorts of trouble to instruct his admiring audience to pull off the same fancy tricks.

When young Bill Chadwell, riding his papa's one saddle horse, showed up better than most, Pitts went to considerable trouble to improve the boy's style. Soon the two of them were seen riding together much of the time. Sometimes Pitts was observed talking earnestly to the wide-eyed farm boy as they jogged their horses along the country roads. Young Bill never divulged what the palaver was all about.

Seemingly, Pitts had all the time in the world to spend riding about and showing off. However, that wasn't the case with young Chadwell; both his farm work and his tail end suffered as a consequence. Papa Chadwell, a hard worker himself, had no patience with a boy who'd neglect his own farm work to chase around the country on horseback with a stranger. Papa Chadwell was getting mighty fed up with the whole situation.

Pitts never could quite locate the sort of cow range he was looking for, but he kept hanging around in the neighborhood until finally his "boss" and several "cowhands" arrived. A hard-eyed, tight-lipped crew, they rode in mounted on the best horses that money could buy and sporting the type saddle rigging to bug out the eyes of a kid hungry for such fancy trappings. They settled in a vacated farm house that Pitts had made some sort of trade for; then made regular horseback trips out from there, ostensibly still looking for good range upon which to graze the cattle they'd bring up from Texas.

These mysterious trips fascinated young Chadwell, who rode with them whenever he could sneak off the farm unobserved. He slipped away one night and two days later Papa Chadwell came across him, hiding down in the tall corn, so scared that he couldn't talk sense. Stumblingly, he tried to explain what had happened, but Papa Chadwell was too riled to listen. The old man had taken all he could of the boy's running off from home and neglecting his work. Now was the time, he figured, to learn that boy a lesson he'd never forget. So he held Bill with one hand, broke off a heavy cornstalk with the other, and proceeded to tear up Bill's rear end worse than a wild sow's bed.

Bill lunged and squalled and pitched and howled and finally got to bawling like a calf in a branding chute. The walloping loosened up his tongue so that he got out the straight of the story he'd been trying to tell. He'd been out on a raid with Jesse James and his gang. They'd robbed a bank and the law had come mighty close to catching them, might even catch them yet!

Papa Chadwell was shocked at this startling revelation, but not too shocked to keep Bill hid out in the cornfield for the next three days while he sneaked food to him. On the fourth morning Bill disappeared, along with his papa's saddle horse. Charlie Pitts and the Jesse James gang disappeared at the same time. All too evidently, young Bill had stolen Papa Chadwell's horse and ridden off to what he considered greener pastures.

THAT was the last Papa Chadwell heard of his son until September of that same year. Then the bad news came. Up in Northfield, Minnesota, Jesse James had robbed a bank but had lost nearly half his gun crew. Among those killed was curly-haired, hero-worshipping Bill Chadwell. Proud of the fact that he'd been picked to go on the raid by Jesse James himself because of his knowledge of the country around Northfield (Bill had once been a resident of Minnesota until run out for stealing a horse), young Chadwell had remained on his horse outside the bank holding the reins of the gang's horses. Cool-headed A. Manning, a merchant, shot Bill through the heart, ending his career as an outlaw before it got well started.

According to Western historians, young Bill Chadwell died a "horse-thief and a hardened criminal." But to Papa Chadwell, sitting forlornly in his Missouri farm house, that didn't seem right. Bill had been a good boy until somewhere along the line he'd gone wrong. The old man wondered sadly if somehow he had failed his son. He could find no answer.

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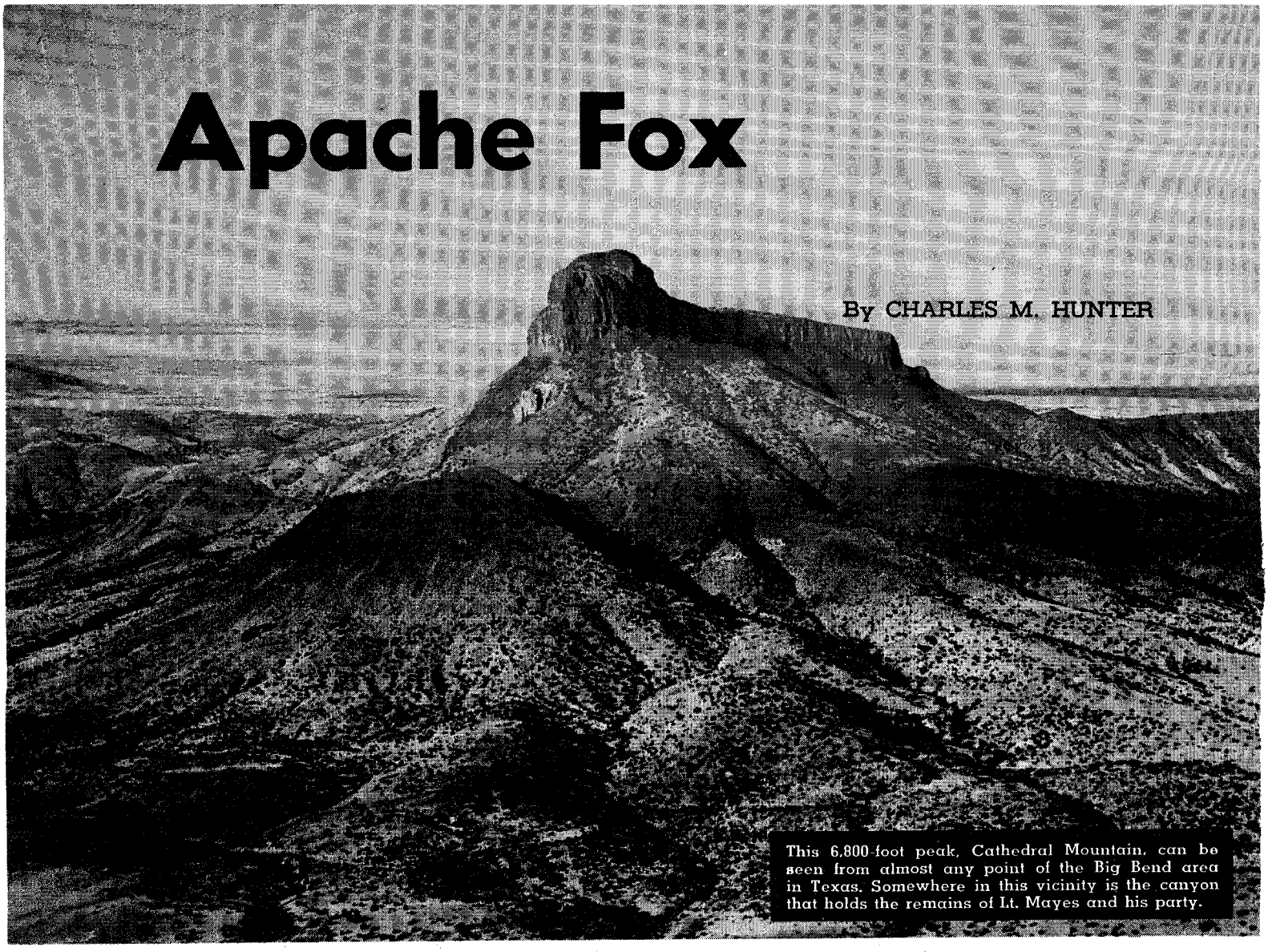
Apache Fox

By CHARLES M. HUNTER



This 6,800-foot peak, Cathedral Mountain, can be seen from almost any point of the Big Bend area in Texas. Somewhere in this vicinity is the canyon that holds the remains of Lt. Mayes and his party.

EARLY in the year 1862, the national picture was darkened by the war between the North and the South. The burning issue of the day was slavery and States' Rights, but in far West Texas the principal danger was the Indians.

Fort Davis, located in Limpia Canyon in the mountains of West Texas, was activated in 1854 by the U. S. Army. It was maintained for the protection of the wagon trains traveling to the west coast, and also for the protection of a few hardy people that had started ranching in the rich grass land of the area. Federal forces occupied Fort Davis until the start of the Civil War; then were replaced by a detachment of Confederate soldiers.

The Apaches bitterly resented the intrusion of the white men who had moved in and taken over their hunting range. Chief Gian-na-tah, of the Mescalero Apaches, swore to kill every White Eye he met, regardless of whether he wore the Blue or Gray or was dressed in the pioneer garb of the time. A White Eye was a White Eye to Gian-na-tah; to be killed on sight.

The rampaging Mescaleros, after literally wiping out the settlements along the Rio Bonita, next turned their bloody attention to those along the Rio Grande. Bands of Apaches were on the prowl in the Big Bend country, where the hard-bitten settlers had long become reconciled to their depredations. The loss of some livestock and an occasional ranchhand to the prowling warriors was a hazard you learned to live with on the frontier.

Six miles south of Fort Davis was the ranch of Don Manuel Musquiz, a wealthy Spaniard, located in the beautiful canyon that still bears his name. The Don's immediate family and relatives made up the settlement of approximately twelve people, in addition to a number of Mexican workers. The ranch house was constructed like a fort and considered impregnable to attack.

Don Manuel, secure in his belief that the ranch house was safe from attack and in the knowledge that the soldiers at Fort Davis were only six miles away, made a hurried trip to Presidio del Norte, 125 miles to the southwest on the Rio Grande. Disaster struck in his absence.

The next morning, just at daybreak, a large war party of Mescaleros under the leadership of old Chief Nicolas, subchief under Gian-na-tah, swept down on the ranch, killing three of the defenders and driving off every fat steer Don Manuel possessed.

COLONEL John R. Baylor, commander of the troops at Fort Davis, hearing of the attack on the Musquiz Ranch, ordered Lieutenant Robert Mayes to lead

He made no distinction between soldiers of the North or South or the pioneers; to this implacable Apache chieftain they were all "White Eyes"—to be killed on sight.

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a detachment of soldiers in an attempt to overtake and punish the raiding Apaches.

Lieutenant Mayes was a handsome and daring young Texan, possibly too eager to show his mettle. The small force of twelve mounted soldiers and four guides, hurriedly took up the trail of the raiders. At Lieutenant Mayes' departure, Colonel Baylor sent a messenger riding hard for Fort Stockton, sixty miles to the east, requesting that reinforcements be dispatched to a designated point to aid Mayes in the search.

Hot on the trail of the Apaches, but not knowing how many there might be, Mayes and his men galloped recklessly on. The trail led south of the Musquiz Ranch to Mitre Peak, ten miles north of the present town of Alpine, Texas; then south in the direction of Cathedral Peak, twenty miles south of Alpine.

Late in the afternoon, Mayes caught sight of the Indians but—as darkness was approaching—he discontinued the hunt for the night. Guards were posted, even though the Lieutenant did not think the Apaches would attack during the night. He was right in this assumption, for the camp was not disturbed.

Early next morning Mayes and his men were in the saddle, eager to bring their quarry to bay. They had little trouble in locating them. The band was small, consisting of about a dozen warriors. Lieutenant Mayes was certain in his own mind that these were the rascals who had attacked the Musquiz Ranch. "They can't escape us now, men," bragged the youthful lieutenant. "We've got the red devils right where we want 'em!"

The soldiers cheered, realizing that the Indians were heading for a long narrow canyon that seemed to be boxed. There was no visible way the Apaches could escape. Waving his heavy Colt Dragoon over his head, Mayes gave the order to charge. Yelling at the top of their voices and whipping their mounts, the troopers dashed into the canyon. The Indians made no attempt to stand and fight, seemingly content to escape. Mayes and his men quirted their horses furiously, but could not close the gap to effective firing range.

Suddenly there was a blasting roar of gunfire and a rain of arrows from the high cliffs on both sides of the doomed soldiers. Too late Mayes saw the folly of his reckless charge. He and his handful of men had fallen into a deadly trap well-laid by the cunning old fox, Nicolas. The chief had planned his *coup* well, and before the soldiers could whirl mounts to escape, their retreat was blocked by screeching warriors. Two hundred and fifty Apaches ringed the sixteen white men in a death trap.

"Dismount and take cover!" yelled Lieutenant Mayes. "Head for the rocks —every man for himself!"

There was no panic among the soldiers as they abandoned their horses to seek shelter among the boulders. One man succeeded in getting between two boulders, where he wedged his body for protection from fire but had to leave his legs exposed. The Apaches fired at the trooper's legs and feet and laughed at his screams of agony as the bullets struck their mark. In the wild confusion, one of the guides got away and hid in a cave.

The fight was over in a few minutes, with all the soldiers killed. When the Apaches made a count, they found that one White Eye was missing, so a minute search was made. All day they hunted for the missing guide but without success. Finally they took off in the direction of Mexico.

The lone survivor, Juan Gonzales, hid in the cave for a day and a night. At last, almost overcome by thirst, he left the cave to find that the Indians had left. Taking as many canteens from the dead soldiers as he could easily carry, Juan set off afoot for Presidio del Norte, many miles to the southwest.

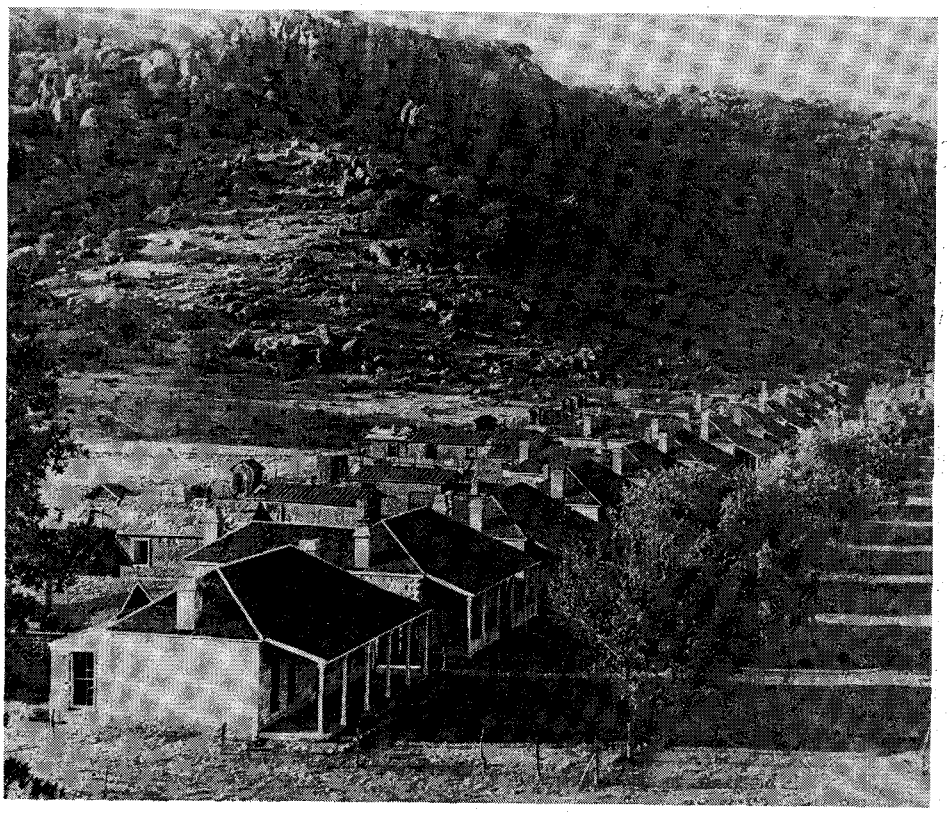
After days of trudging through the rough country where there were no trails, Gonzales finally succeeded in reaching Presidio del Norte. Immediately a messenger was dispatched to intercept the troops from Fort Stockton with news of the tragedy that had overtaken Lieutenant Mayes and his detachment.

Following the well-marked trail left by Mayes' party, the commander of the detail from Fort Stockton read the signs left by the crafty old Nicolas. The chief had moved the main body of his warriors to each side of the trail of the pursued Indians, and Mayes—who had not bothered to throw out flankers—had not noticed the move.

The remains of the ill-fated lieutenant and his men were quickly found. Coyotes and other predators had finished the ghastly work the Apaches had begun. There was not enough left of the bodies to pack out; the best that could be done with them was to pile them together and cover the corpses with large boulders.

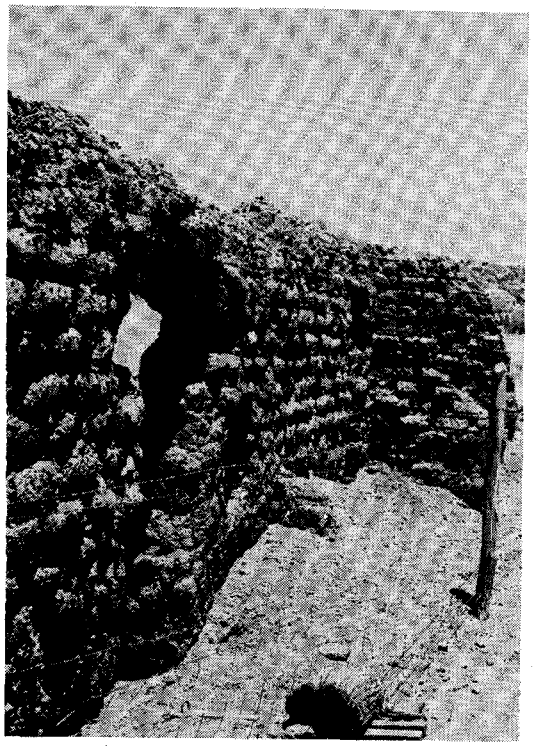
Many attempts have been made in later years to find the canyon and the lonely graves of the troops. There are many canyons that answer the description, but the right one remains a mystery to this day.

Juan Gonzales was begged by comrades and relatives of the slain soldiers to show them the location of the canyon. Juan merely shrugged, rolled a corn-husk cigarette and murmured: *"No quiero ir."* The dread memory of the Apache Fox was too vivid in the Mexican's mind for him to ever seek the fateful canyon.



Fort Davis was activated in 1854 for the protection of the immigrants going to the west coast. In 1861 it was abandoned by the U. S. forces, being occupied by the Confederate forces shortly thereafter. The fort was finally abandoned around 1891. This photo was taken when the fort was occupied.

What remains of the fort-like ranch house of Don Manuel Musquiz, located six miles south of Fort Davis in a beautiful canyon that bears the name of Musquiz Canyon today. A portion of the walls now stand.



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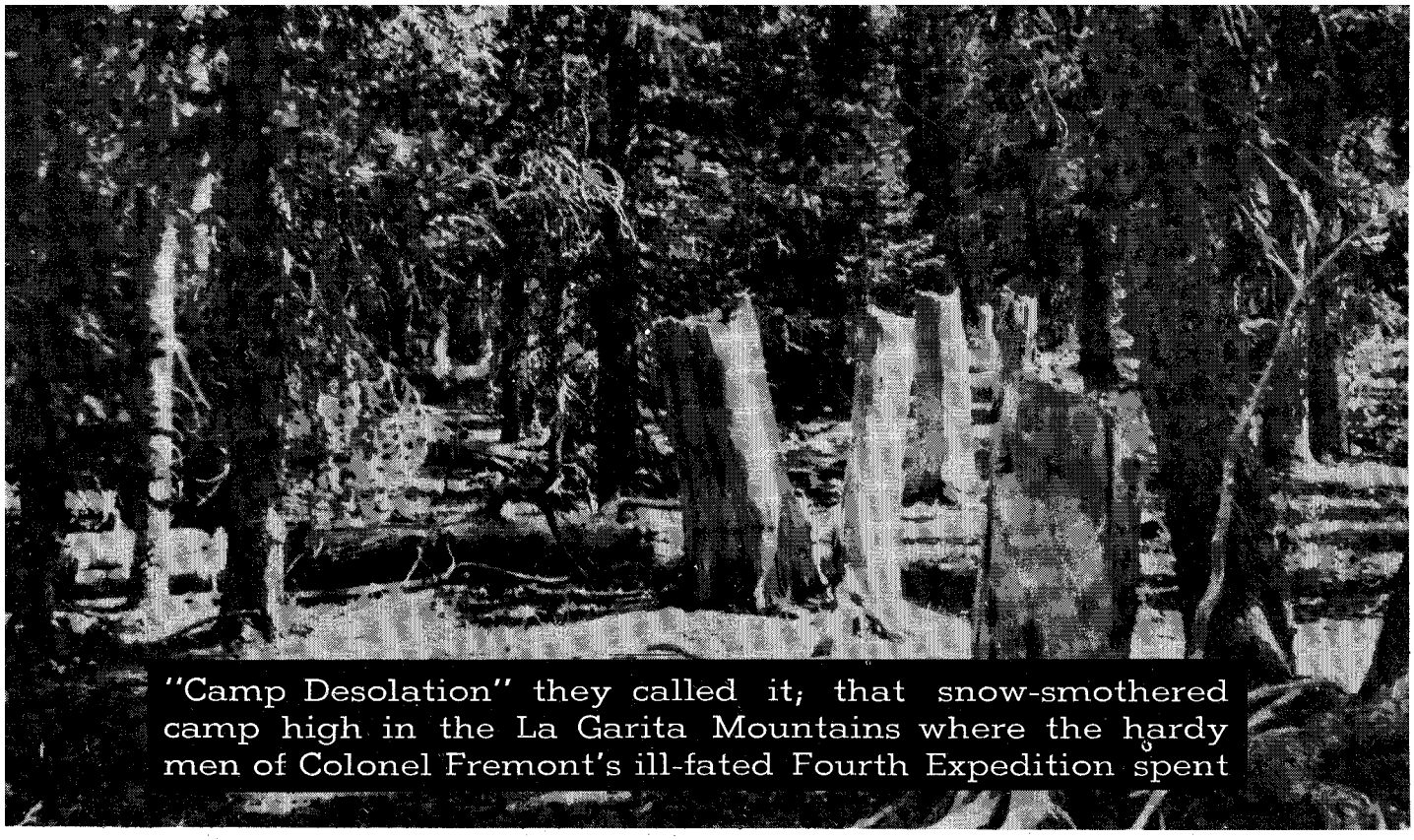

"Camp Desolation" they called it; that snow-smothered camp high in the La Garita Mountains where the hardy men of Colonel Fremont's ill-fated Fourth Expedition spent

Christmas, 1848

By BERNICE MARTIN

IT was Christmas Eve, and the despairing men of Fremont's party huddled together on the twelve thousand foot mountain top knew that it was unlikely they would ever see another. Too weak and miserable to talk, they dreamed continually of food and the Christmas dinners at home.

Colonel John Charles Fremont, who accomplished the seemingly impossible more times than once in his former explorations, had ignored the warnings of old trappers and Indian guides to try to lead his men through one of the highest and most rugged of all the Rocky Mountain ranges. On this Fourth Expedition, disaster had overtaken the party.

For a week they had been pinned down at the wretched camp on a small rocky point at the edge of a bleak windy peak in the La Garita Mountains. Again and again small parties of men had attempted to find another camp, but the driving blizzards drove them back.

Then Fremont's advance party, which had crossed the high, bare stone ridge to the headwaters of Wannmaker Creek a few storm-battered miles beyond, returned. To cross the divide, they reported, was even more hopeless.

On the day before Christmas they managed to move their camp back about two miles to the edge of a large pine forest. It took incredible effort.

The deep snow would bear them up for two or three steps with their heavy loads, then at the next step they would break through, going waist deep, and have to scramble out as best they could, to try again. They took advantage of every steep descent, fixing their parfleches so that they would slide, and giving them a push, which would send them bounding and sliding along fifty or a hundred yards at a stretch. Sometimes they fetched up with great violence against a tree or rock, and occasionally a man would have his feet knocked out from under him.

But camp was finally set up by the head springs of a little stream which they believed might lead them down to the Rio Grande del Norte in the San Luis Valley below.

THE snow continued day and night, and the high wind off the mountain tops filled the air with drifting snow at all times. At frequent intervals they could hear the roar of snowslides which rushed from the steep sides of the mountains and crashed like big guns in the canyons below.

"Camp Desolation," the men named the camp, although Fremont in his report much later, called it the "Christmas Camp." The men dug holes in the deep snow and built their campfires in the center. There were several such fires and each little mess was separate, since the pits were so deep the men could not look over the sides into the next pit. Down in these holes they slept, spreading what remained of their blankets on the snow.

For days they had been tearing strips from the blankets to make crude moccasins and leggings for their frost-bitten feet, and the blankets were shrinking fast in size.

There was no other timber but the pine at the Christmas camp and the strong pine smoke confined in the deep pits, together with the reflection from the snow, had partially blinded all the men. They could not have seen the sights of their guns even if there had been game.

But there was none. No vestige of life appeared in the lofty solitude. The men would have welcomed the hoarse cry of a raven or the howling of a wolf to break the awful silence of the dismal white world.

The mules that were left stood huddled together on the mountain. They had given up the vain search for grass. The long beards about their mouths stood

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like icicles and their breath settled on their breasts, coating their front and sides with thick white hoar frost. The snow clung to their hooves and fetlocks until it formed a ball half a foot thick and they walked continually on snowy stilts. Their ears had frozen perfectly stiff and some had broken pieces off to leave bleeding stumps.

They had devoured each other's tails and in some cases even parts of the rump or shoulders. At night they tried to eat the blankets off the dozing men, and the men were wary lest they find human flesh the next resort. The unfortunate animals roamed all night, pawing in the snow now and then. Occasionally one would tumble down into the fires in the pits, ineffectually hunting food in the cooking pots to relieve their ravenous hunger.

The men looked even worse than the mules. For two months their beards and hair had grown. Their breath froze upon their faces making their lips so stiff from the ice it was difficult to speak. Their eyes were almost shut from the ice which froze on their lashes and the snow-blindness. Long icicles hung down from their nostrils. Each hair of their beards stood out to itself alone, white and stiff with frost. There were sores on their faces from freezing and burn, and short rations for weeks had whittled the flesh away to blackened masks.

BY Christmas Eve they were reduced to the meat of the frozen mules for their entire diet. Later one of the survivors named Breckenridge, wrote up the menu for "Christmas Dinner—1848" in a jocular vein.

MENU
CAMP DESOLATION—
December 25, 1848
SOUP
Mule Tail
FISH
Baked White Mule Boiled Gray Mule
MEAT
Mule Steak Fried Mule
Mule Chops Broiled Mule
Stewed Mule Boiled Mule
Scrambled Mule
Poached Mule French Fried Mule
Minced Mule Damned Mule
Mule on Toast (without toast)
Short Ribs of Mule with apple sauce
RELISHES
Black Mule Brown Mule Bay Mule
Roan Mule Yellow Mule
Tallow Candles
BEVERAGES
Snow Snow Water
Water

Old Bill Williams, experienced mountain man though he was, had arrived in camp with the returning advance party the night before Christmas in such a state of exhaustion that he sat in a stupor until his companions helped him to one of the pit fires. But he was apparently somewhat revived the next day, for Fremont chose him with three other men to make a desperate attempt to get help from the Mexican settlements miles to the south.

Colonel John Charles Fremont was a little man, only an inch or so over five feet, and he had frozen one of his legs which made difficulty in walking, but he stood tall as always, and no one ever questioned his orders.

King, Creutzfeldt, Breckenridge and Bill Williams were to proceed with all possible speed down the Rio Del Norte to Abiquiu where they were to procure provisions and mules to relieve the rest of the party. The distance as far as he could make out was about one hundred eighty miles, and he would expect them back in sixteen days.

Why King was chosen to lead the party remains a mystery. A week later he was to lie down beside the trail and die of starvation and exhaustion.

Creutzfeldt was the botanist of the expedition. Breckenridge, who outlived all the survivors, stated long afterward that he and Fremont had been in many tight places together and he was chosen to go because the colonel knew that he was the hardest and toughest man in the party.

Tall, ungainly Bill Williams with his shock of graying red hair, took pride in his reputation as a mountain man. He was always a grotesque sight when riding a mule at the head of whatever party he happened to be guiding. He had a habit of lopping forward till he gave the appearance of a hunchback, his stirrups ridiculously short, making his buck-skin clad knees keep company with the saddle horn. But this time there were no mules.

The last mules had finally perished after being driven to a near-by hill-top

John C. Fremont

which seemed to have patches of grass on it. Only the grass turned out to be tops of bare trees buried in the deep snow, and the mules never moved from the spot.

ON Christmas day the rescue party started. They carried as little weight as possible with them. They took one blanket apiece, a few pounds of frozen mule meat, about a pound of sugar, a little macaroni, and a few candles—all the food in camp except the frozen mules. They had three Hawken rifles for defense against the Indians, about fifty bullets, one shotgun and one pound of powder.

Breckenridge handed a sack of $1200 in Spanish dubloons to Fremont, asking that he take charge of it and bring it out with him when he came.

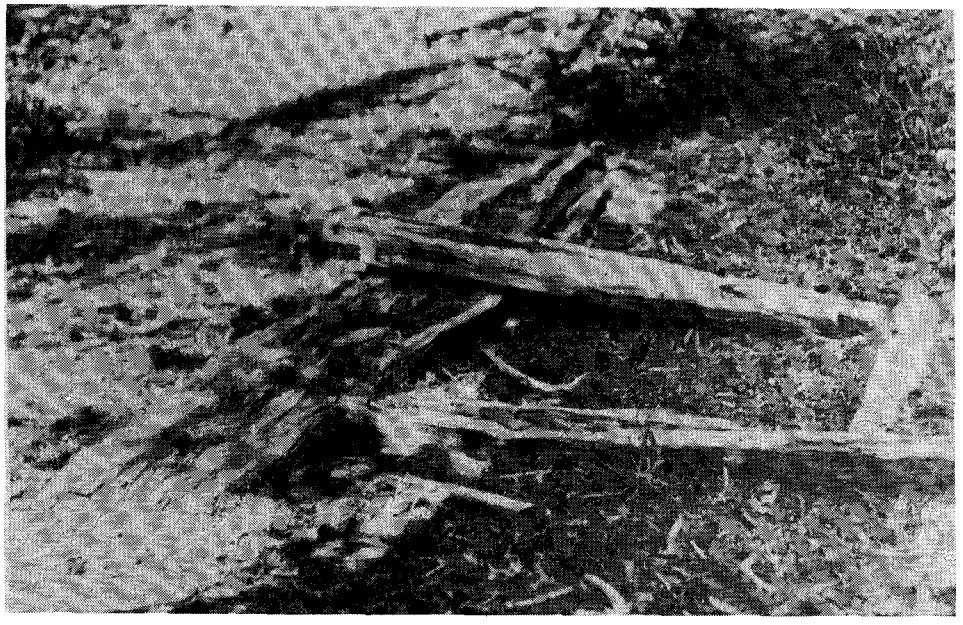
The Rio Grande was only eight miles away but it took them three difficult days to reach it. Their food was gone now, there was no game in sight, and they began living on the parched leather of their boots, belts, and knife scabbards.

At Williams' suggestion, they attempted to take a short cut across the big ox-bow bend of the Rio Grande which was considerably shorter, but much harder traveling. He had overestimated their strength, and now they were in plenty of trouble. In a few days they were starving, snow-blind, half-mad from the terrible agony they were enduring.

Back at the mountain top camp, Fremont and his men began on Christmas day the construction of a rough sled about six feet long on which they hoped to carry their baggage to the river. They continued to eat the mule meat while it was within reach for they knew that they could carry little with them.

The way to the river was rough. Passing over precipitous mountain spurs and deep ravines in which the water was pitching and brawling beneath the ice as they crossed, they clambered downward, breaking through the deep snow's

(Continued on page 32)



This is the remains of the handmade sled that the Fremont expedition constructed for moving its supplies over the icy terrain during their isolation in the La Garita Mountains.

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Pony Express statue at St. Joseph, Missouri, that dramatically depicts the daring and imaginative innovation of three St. Joe businessmen.

The exciting story of the "Mochila Mail." A brief but thrilling chapter in the history of transportation in the Far West—the rise and fall of the

PONY EXPRESS

By LESLIE G. KENNON

I TELL you it won't work! Absurd idea—a bunch of riders carrying mail across country wild and unsettled, across Indian territory, using unmapped trails and depending upon a string of outposts from Missouri to California. It would *never* work!"

Alexander Majors stared at his impractical partner, considering that he must have lost his mind to even envision such a wild scheme as a "Pony Express" in this year of 1860. Majors knew that William H. Russell had always been a visionary. His other partner, W. B. Waddell, simply wasn't a businessman. It was he, Alexander Majors, who carried the burden of making the firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell an economic success. The going was rough sometimes—especially when Russell came up with one of his crackpot schemes to make a fortune. Such as now.

Waddell, as usual, kept out of the argument. He was content to go along with whatever Majors and Russell decided. His tactics had paid off. With little effort on his part, he had already amassed a considerable fortune.

"I tell *you,* Majors," roared Russell, "it *will* work! Right now Congress is in a hot debate over the routing of mail. A fast mail route is vital to both the North and the South. The Free Staters don't like the Butterfield route. Why, man, if we play our cards right, we've got a gold mine in this Pony Express! Top men in Congress have asked me to go through with it. Senator Gwin in California told me the Governor would go along with us one hundred percent, and he assured us of their backing on the floor of Congress."

Majors snorted. *"Backing!* How much *cash* did he say they'd put up?"

"I don't mean backing in money. Damn it, Majors, can't you understand there are some things more important than money?"

"Name one. I notice that *you* seem to enjoy living well."

The argument continued and, as it developed, the only thing that sold Majors on the idea of the Pony Express was the fact that Russell had already promised Senator Gwin that he would do it. Congress had been notified of the plan.

Majors was not a man to back down on any promise made by his firm, even if made by a "half-witted" partner who couldn't see the dangers involved. Quite possibly, his decision was strongly influenced by the fact that a Government contract for carrying the mails was practically assured.

Conflict between Majors and Russell was inevitable, due to their dissimilar backgrounds. (Waddell, the third partner, was of small importance, and so little information about him is on record.)

WILLIAM HEPBURN RUSSELL was born January 31, 1812, in Burlington, Vermont, the son of William Eaton and Myrtilla Hepburn Russell. His father was a soldier in the war of 1812, who died two years after the start of hostilities. His mother then married a Colonel Bangs, and the family moved to Missouri. At this time, Missouri was the outpost of Western expansion; still wild but rapidly becoming civilized to a degree where it later became known as "The Mother of the West."

To this changing land of diversified interests and viewpoints came William H. Russell as a sensitive, emotional boy. He began work at sixteen as a clerk, later becoming a merchant and finally partner in a bank at Richmond, Missouri.

On June 9, 1835, he married Harriet Elliott Warder, a preacher's daughter, and by the late forties was engaged in freighting on Government contracts.

Alexander Majors was born October 4, 1814, near Franklin in Simpson County, Kentucky, the son of Laurania (Kelly) and Benjamin Majors, a native of North Carolina.

The family moved to what is now Lafayette County, Missouri, in 1819. They acquired an extensive farm, with saw and flour mills, in Jackson County, living there from 1825 to 1858.

Alexander worked on the farm and as a miller's boy. On November 6, 1834, he married Katherine Stallcup, and the young couple began farming on their own. At this time, Majors was having a struggle reconciling his deep religious convictions with a keen, practical business sense. In this he was successful.

In August of 1848, Majors undertook the carrying of freight from Independence to Santa Fe with an outfit of six wagons and teams. His first trip, completed in ninety-two days, cleared $1,500. Majors was perhaps the oddest boss freighter ever to ply the storied Santa Fe Trail. He refused to work on Sunday and made his men pledge—as he later made his Pony Express riders pledge—not to cuss, drink, gamble, treat animals cruelly or do "anything else that is incompatible with the conduct of a gentleman." He paid good wages, otherwise it is to be feared he would have had difficulty hiring a crew.

RUSSELL joined Majors and W. B. Waddell in a freighting partnership December 28, 1854, with an operating center at Leavenworth, Kansas. Four years later the partnership became the firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell.

Business grew rapidly under Majors' shrewd management. He took full responsibility for all the business on the roads, while Russell and Waddell financed and purchased.

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Majors hired more than 4,000 men and used 40,000 oxen and 1,000 mules. Shipments traveled in trains of about twenty-five wagons each, with stations several miles apart—a system later used in the Pony Express. Each wagon had twelve oxen and a teamster; and each train had thirty oxen in reserve, five mules, a wagon master and some extra men.

The profits of the ambitious venture in 1855-56 were $300,000. In 1857 the firm's operations were expanded when a contract was obtained for supplying the Army ordered to Utah.

In May, 1859, Russell and a John S. Jones opened a stage line from Leavenworth to Denver, which was taken over by the firm within a year. In February, 1860, the Central Overland and Pike's Peak Express company was chartered with Russell as president. The line ran first-class coaches through to California. Mail required twenty-three days for the journey from St. Louis to San Francisco.

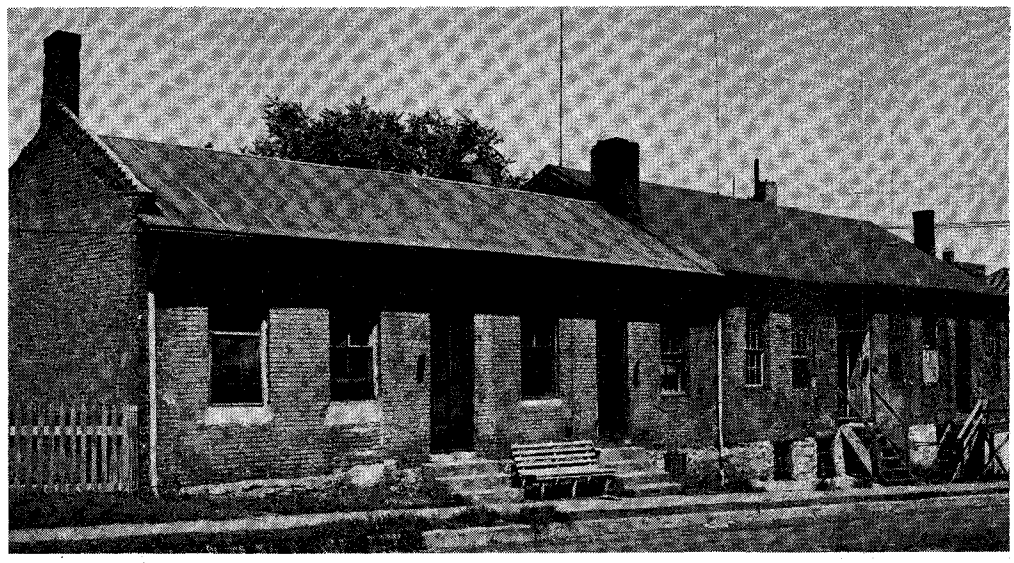
St. Joseph itself, in the days prior to the Pony Express, was a transportation center. The town had been named for the patron saint of Joseph Robidoux, who as early as 1803 had traded with the Indians at Blacksnake Hills. The name was changed from Robidoux's Trading Post to St. Joseph in 1843.

The Pony Express was ready to go within sixty days after the decision was made.

It was, all things considered, a masterpiece of organization. And it is significant that in all the mails carried by Pony Express only one pouch was lost. In another case of lost mail, the rider was waylaid and murdered but the mail was found intact and promptly delivered. In later days, riders went only ten or twelve miles before changing horses (which they did in two minutes or less) due to the closeness of the stations. Mail traveled from Washington, D.C. to San Francisco—an airline distance of 3,500 miles—in only fourteen days. This was an average speed of 250 miles a day, by steamboat, railroad, magnetic telegraph and horse-flesh.

The *San Francisco Herald* stated on April 16, 1860: "The Pony Express has performed a feat which excites the wonder and admiration of all."

The restriction placed on riders—other than the strict moral ones imposed by Majors—was great. All the riders chosen were small but sinewy; probably none weighed over 135 pounds and many little more than a hundred. Riders and other employees of the firm received wages of from forty to one hundred and fifty dollars a month and were housed and fed at company expense.



This is St. Joseph's "Robidoux Row," site of Robidoux's Trading Post in Missouri. The trading post was the original settlement of what became St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1843.

Saddles were specially designed, hybrids of the "Western" and jockey types, lightweight with saddle horns and cantles for comfort in riding long distances. They were only about a third the weight of the saddles of the *vaqueros*, the type then generally used in California. Most of these special saddles were made by Israel Landis' famous saddlery in St. Louis.

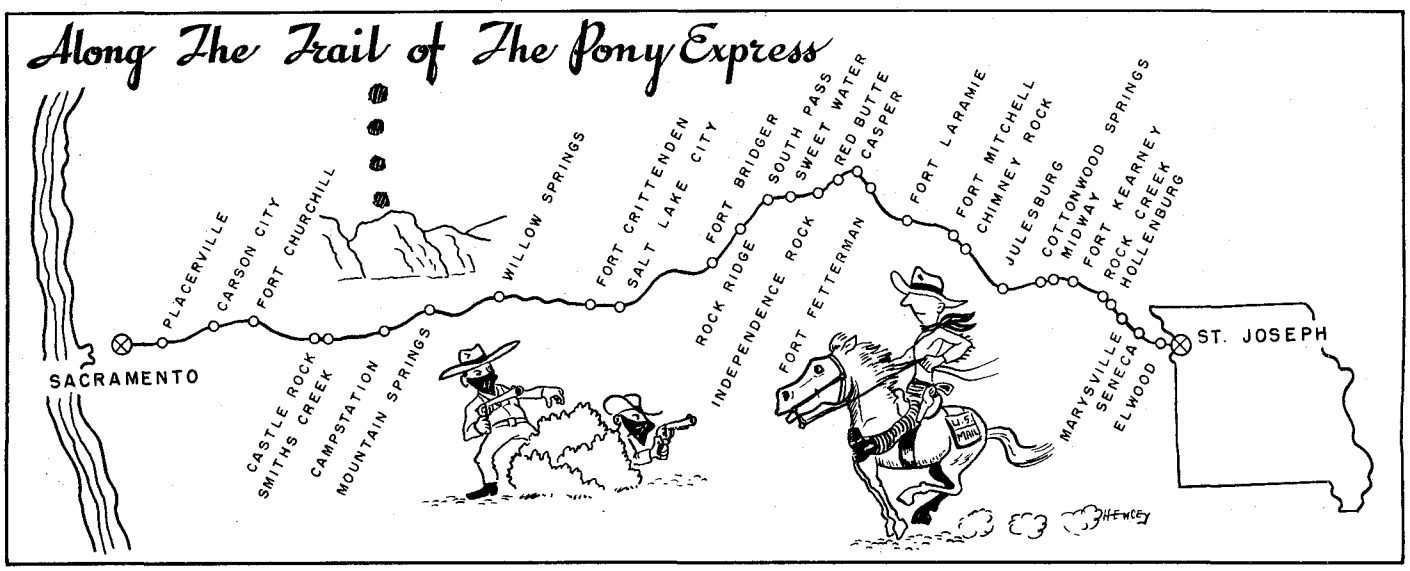
An interesting feature was the *mochila*, or leather blanket, thrown over the saddle, with holes for the horn and cantle. Ordinary mail pouches, those used for regular mail, were much too awkward and cumbersome to be used for the new service. Specially made *mochilas*, adapted from the Spanish, were made with four *cantinas*, locked pockets of leather, fastened to the *mochila* and lined with oilskin to protect the precious mail from the sweat of the animal, from the rain and snow, or from streams, should a rider be forced to swim his mount. As the rider straddled his horse, there was a pocket in front of and behind each thigh. Only the agents at either end of the line, and specially designated officials, had keys to these locked pockets, but the "way" pocket was left open for messages t en or delivered along the route and or the waybill on which the name of ne station and time of arrival and departure were to be written.

The route was across Kansas into Nebraska near Rock Creek and on to Fort Kearney by way of Thirty-two Mile Creek, following the Platte for some distance, thence northwest to Fort Laramie.

Riders crossed the foothills at the base of the Rockies at South Pass, went on to Fort Bridger, Salt Lake City, Carson City, Placerville, Folsom and Sacramento. From there the mail traveled by fast boat to San Francisco.

THERE are many fabulous and fascinating stories connected with riders of the Express. Jack H. Keetley, the "joyous jockey" who operated on the route out of St. Joe, in payment of a bet once rode 340 miles without rest. Jack claimed that Alex Carlisle was the first to carry the mail out of St. Joe, though claims are registered for several others; the most often mentioned being Johnny Frey.

In Nevada during 1860, a pony galloped into a way station with the rider slumped over the saddle horn, his lifeless body pierced by several arrows. So tight was the clutch of his hand that the pony's mane had to be cut from his grasp. The gallant mount had carried on, bringing the mail through safely.



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William H. Russell (left) and Alexander Majors, the two moving forces behind the founding of the imaginative Pony Express.

"Pony Bob" Haslam, carrying the news of Lincoln's election, was attacked by Indians, but reached his relief station after a remarkable ride of 120 miles in eight hours, his jaw shattered by an arrow and his left arm badly wounded. Not long after this harrowing experience, Bob was back carrying the mail.

The distance regularly covered by a Pony Express rider ranged from thirty-five to seventy-five miles a day, depending on the terrain he covered. Speed, come hell or high water, had to average nine miles per hour; but delays caused by blizzards, torrential rains, excessive darkness, exhausting summer heat and unforseen accidents, had to be reckoned with. Some outstanding riders averaged twenty miles per hour, but the overall average was right at the scheduled figure.

Every American boy in those days wanted to be a Pony Express rider. The number first assigned to this dangerous but highly exciting job was eighty. They were the pick of the crop; boys in their 'teens, dependable, strong, courageous, and astonishingly agile and accomplished horsemen. What they lacked in years and experience they made up in sheer nerve and physical stamina.

The financial loss to the partners was immediate and great, however. The founders had invested $100,000 originally, and $30,000 a month were required for operating expenses. Indian damage alone cost $75,000 in the first three months.

Often Express riders were able to outdistance hostile Indians on their fleet ponies, but many men were killed while carrying the mails or at the stations, which were under frequent attack.

The Pony Express was vital to rapid communication of messages at its inception. Large Eastern newspapers maintained correspondents in St. Louis to wire the news from the West as it came in via Pony Express. Western papers often headed items: "We hear from Pony Express . . ."

William M. Finney, general agent for the firm, posted bills advertising "Pony Express, eight days from San Francisco to New York. The Pony Express of the Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Company will leave San Francisco for New York and intermediate points on Friday, 20th of April, 1860, and on every Friday thereafter at 4 o'clock p. m. Schedule time from San Francisco to New York for telegraphic dispatches, eight days; for letters twelve days. N.B.—The public will understand that by telegraphing to Carson City, 27½ hours later intelligence (news, messages, etc.) can be sent to St. Joseph, Missouri, than by letter to San Francisco." (Actual copy of poster.)

At the inception of the famous mail service, the Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad carried tissue mail destined for the Pony Express' first run on April 3, 1860. Addison Clark, the road's top engineer, was told to "make a record that will stand for thirty years."

The route was dangerous and the road-bed not seasoned. Rails were light in those days and curves and grades not standardized. Yet the 206-mile run was covered at an average speed of fifty miles an hour and the mail arrived at St. Joseph in time for the Pony Express to depart on schedule.

The first mail carried between sixty and eighty pieces, including a message from President Buchanan to the Governor of California which had been telegraphed as far as St. Joseph. Later, the new service was to carry such important news as Lincoln's Inaugural Address, the fall of Fort Sumter, the call for troops at the start of the Civil War, and the bloody battle of Antietam.

On that first historic run, over 1900 miles of rough terrain, the eastbound mail came to St. Joseph in nine days, twenty-three hours, and the westbound was delivered in eleven days, twelve hours.

The Pony Express required 190 relay stations (one of which still stands unaltered at the Hollenberg ranchhouse near Hanover, Kansas), 420 horses and 400 station-keepers. Until stations could be built at points between runs, tent shelters for horses and men were erected each twelve to fifteen miles. Farther on, the distance between stops was often more than twenty-five miles.

The initial letter rate was five dollars per half-ounce in gold, later reduced to one dollar. Mail was limited to letters and telegrams, all to be written on tissue paper, which was enclosed in oil-cloth as protection against severe weather. The maximum weight of any one mail was twenty pounds.

Yet, the entire venture—as Majors had predicted—was a crushing financial flop. The operation folded in October, 1861, due to a fast developing series of events resulting in rendering the service obsolete almost overnight. The knockout came when telegraph wires spanned the nation and overland stages took over carrying the mails. The three partners —again according to Majors' prediction —went broke. Majors even surrendered his personal estate to help pay company debts.

The Pony Express was simply a victim of bad timing, coming as it did just before the advent of the transcontinental telegraph. On the ninety-fifth anniversary of its founding in St. Joseph (where the original stables have been preserved by the Goetz Pony Express Foundation), U. S. Postmaster General Summerfield, in saluting its achievements, said that it "was a financial failure but a romantic triumph."

It was all that and more, for the exciting story of the short-lived *"Mochila Mail"* is the most thrilling chapter in the history of transportation in the Far West.

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Truly Western

NORMNOTE:

Seems like we stirred up a hornet's nest by asking readers to vote on Russell Pace's suggestion that we make True West an all lawman-gunslinger magazine. Letters continue to snow in, overwhelmingly in favor of keeping the magazine as it is or of making it even more devoted to telling the stories of the lesser known "common folks" who actually built the West.

To a somewhat lesser degree, letters continue to arrive in our offices discussing Tom Mix, the Actor versus the Man. Joe and I discussed the matter and decided that it would be best to devote one whole "Truly Western" column to a representative cross-section of letters on both these subjects and thereby clear the column for letters on other matters in the future. Please understand that the letters printed are not necessarily the best letters received on these subjects, but merely the letters that in our opinion offer the most information, entertainment, etc., to our reader audience as a whole. Also, please do not feel slighted if your letter is not included among them. As I pointed out in a previous issue, if we printed even one-tenth of the letters we receive, there wouldn't be room for stories, advertisements, or anything else in TW. And you wouldn't like that now, would you? —NBW.

Editor, *True West:*

I have been reading *True West* since Volume 1, Number 1, printed in the summer of 1953, and have every copy to date, kept in regular *True West* binders.

I enjoy reading about all phases of the Old West, even if some carping readers take time to write you criticizing stories, dates, and other details. To these folks in general, and to Mr. Russell Pace in particular, I refer Joe's statement in Volume 1, Number 1, on Page 4. In the column headed "Is This It?", he made this statement: "To the best of our ability, we are going to publish an honest magazine on the West as it really was and is. It will be for people who want the facts along with their entertainment. We will do the best we can to publish a true, entertaining, original, interesting magazine, and will let the chips fall where they may—so help us God!"

Well, there it is. It is not an oath and not signed by any notary public. Maybe the dates in some of the stories are not exact. After all, it is the *story* we want and we know these stories *did* happen. Perhaps not precisely in the way the writer states, but basically the same. The publisher further stated: "So that's our pledge to you. If it happened, we're going to print it just the way it happened. Some of it may be a little raw; there may be some language that's a bit heavy."

That last sentence, Mr. Editor, brings me to a subject which I think merits further discussion. It is my belief that you can use other words to replace cuss words in stories; particularly those words that refer to mothers who, in all probability, were not deserving of such rank condemnation. For example, the words used in "Outlaw Exterminators, Inc.," page 34, where Clay's partner, Beeber, says: "Look, Clay, you and I are staying on that son-of-a-bitch's trail until we get him, or he gets us." Also, on page 6, where Allman says: "So long, you bastards, I'll see you in hell!" Our kids, too, read these thrilling and sometimes historical stories and I believe that they, and all of us, should be spared being exposed to "shocking rawness" whenever possible. There are ways you can make it known when the actual quotations are such that they really are unprintable without detracting from the vigor of the story.

In closing, may I say as a charter member of *True West,* keep printing good stories to the best of your ability and the majority of your readers will be satisfied.—D. C. Tucker, Box 142, Bridger, Montana.

We like letters like the one above from Dub Ballow, 1528 S. Main, Weatherford, Texas. That's all he wrote!

That was a good letter you wrote, Mr. Tucker—the kind an editor and publisher appreciates. Let me recap a bit on this subject of salty language that you bring up. We started True West with the sole idea of publishing a real, authentic Western man's magazine. It is a mighty hard thing to tell just exactly where to draw a line relative to publishing an authentic Western magazine. If you have a cowboy say, "Doggone your time, Mr. Smith!" when he really said, "Damn your heart, you bastard!" you surely are not being authentic on the talk and the people. To my mind the subject can be summed up in the words of a famous author—I believe it was John Steinbeck discussing his classic novel Grapes of Wrath: "But this is the way these people talked and acted. It is a writer's solemn obligation to present truth in his writings, and if the truth is harsh and disturbing to some delicate-minded people, they should turn to something frothy and cheerful, guaranteed not to upset the most sheltered maiden in the most protected finishing school for Elite Young Ladies."

Our readers call True West "the cleanest magazine on the stands." We have letters from ministers commending us for our wholesome publication, and we are going to keep it that way. But when it comes to deleting expressions which are an integral part of the language of the period and locale of the stories being published, we would not be keeping faith with our readers if we did not use them. Obscenity and blasphemy are out —but not the everyday rough talk of the frontier.

As far as the kids are concerned, I think the only way you'll ever keep them from hearing rough language is to lock them in a 10 x 10 cell and never let them see the light of day. My belief is that we should teach kids to evaluate and reject certain things in life rather than try and keep their eyes screened from them completely—which is impossible. We personally think that too much time is spent on the little things when there are much more fertile fields to explore. Why stop to chase a horsefly that is pestering your paint when your finest gelding is caught in a nearby barbed wire fence and is slowly being cut to pieces?

However, I do see what you mean by ways of making raw words known without detracting from the vigor of a story. We'll give it a whirl—and thanks for the suggestion. That's why we like to put these questions before you boys in the first place. —Joe.

Dear Joe:

NO! We do not want *True West* to be an all gunfighter-lawman magazine. If Mr. Pace wants it narrowed down to that, let him subscribe to Ed Bartholemew's book *Album of Western Gunfighters.*

The name *True West* implies the *truth* about the West; the men who actually *made* the west, the horses and mules who played such a vital part in it, the burros, the dogs, all contributing their share. Most of all, it means telling the stories of the unsung heroes of the West —not the gunslingers and outlaws, I'm sure!

In short, we like to read about cattle drives, early day ranches, hunters, trappers, miners, Indians, the railroads, the desert, the mountains, the prairies, buffalo, coyotes, wolves, etc. The scope of the West is as wide as it is big. To say that the Old West means only gunfighters is a gross misconception, and certainly an extremely narrow-minded viewpoint. We look forward to every issue of your wonderful magazine and wouldn't want it changed one iota.—Loraine Sindel, P.O. Box 21, Prineville, Oregon.

Dear Joe and Norm:

I've had a most unpleasant experience thumbing through the April issue of *True West*—I read a letter by Russell Pace, of Silver Spring, Maryland, in which he—who, I notice, lives on the EAST coast—tried to tell us what the West was really like. 'Twere full of gunfighters, he says. I do not consider

(Continued on page 44)

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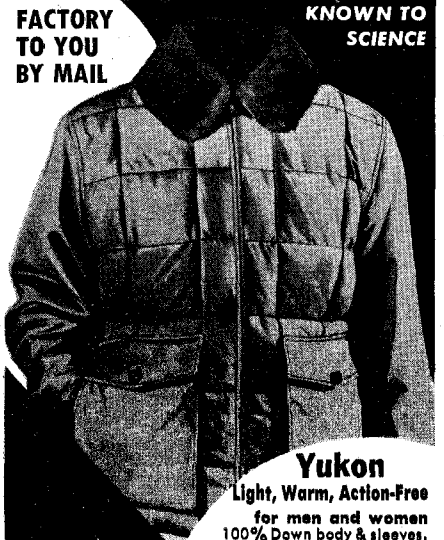

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Pat Garrett's Last Ride

(Continued from page 6)

It was a pleasant enough place as desert ranches go, the small house standing in a sheltered spot between two hills at the very foot of the range five miles north of the Tularosa road. There was a spring up the hill a little way, providing water for stock and a garden. The broad Tularosa Valley made a giant-size front yard with the Sacramentos, thirty miles away, for a fence.

Pat had a little money at first, and he invested it in good horse flesh, hoping to get back into his former business of breeding race horses. But the old quiet, confident Pat Garrett was gone; a restless, irritable, aging man had replaced him. A year before his death he stopped drinking, but he still played poker and did not like to lose. He quarreled with his neighbors, ran short of money, and found no peace.

One complication followed another. First there was the money he borrowed from W. W. Cox and the trouble he had in paying it back—then the loss of the cattle Cox was holding—the leasing of his pasture to Wayne Brazel, Cox's friend—and now this trouble about the goats. Carl Adamson and his partner; debts; frustration . . .

That partner of Adamson's was on Pat's mind as the buggy snailed up the long slope to the top of the San Augustine Pass. J. P. Miller of Fort Worth! That must be Jim Miller who used to live at Pecos—relative of John Wesley Hardin. Miller had a record himself—killed his brother-in-law in East Texas somewhere—shot Bud Fraser through a saloon door at Toyah—others since. They said he would kill anybody for money and had maybe twenty notches on his gun. Pious fellow, though. Always dressed like a preacher and went to church. Made a lot of influential friends that way. It was queer about his having a ranch in Oklahoma. If it was the same Miller, he was a hotel man when he wasn't assassinating somebody. The whole business was queer.

They topped out on the pass with the Rio Grande Valley spread out before them and the Tularosa plain behind—half a world in one eye-flight. Neither of them had any thought for that tremendous panorama. The road dipped downward; the horses broke into a trot; and just then they saw Wayne Brazel ahead, bound for Las Cruces like themselves.

He was just an ordinary cowboy to look at—rough clothes, wind-reddened face under a beat-up Stetson. A quiet fellow, not a bit pugnacious, and liked by everybody. He carried a Winchester in a saddle scabbard, but that was just part of a riding costume in those days.

The old topic started up again and it was still going when they stopped at L. B. Bentley's store and post office at Organ mining camp. Bentley could see that Garrett was angry. Long afterward he used to tell how Pat's jaw shook as he talked. The last thing he heard as the party left was Wayne Brazel saying plaintively but firmly, "But Pat, I *can't* get those goats off."

Three hours later, a little after noon, Brazel rode up to Henry Stoes' house in Las Cruces, tied his horse to the fence and called Henry away from his lunch. "I just killed Pat Garrett," he said. "He's lying under a laprobe about five miles out. I had to do it. It was him or me. Will you come with me to the sheriff's office?"

ADAMSON told his story at the preliminary hearing before Justice Manuel Lopez on March 3. He was quite comical and made the spectators laugh several times. There was a big crowd—so big that many would-be listeners could not get in. Brazel sat looking out of the window, seemingly quite unconcerned, while Carl talked.

"I knew Pat Garrett about three weeks," Adamson said. "I met him at his ranch. Brazel and I met about a week ago. On our way in that morning, just the other side of Organ, we saw Brazel talking to someone in the road. He passed us on horseback—had a Winchester on his saddle. We only spoke. No, we didn't exactly travel together. Sometimes he was close; sometimes he was behind.

"When we were getting close to Las Cruces, I asked him if his goats were kidding. Garrett said, 'How does it come you signed a contract for 1,200 goats when you've got 1,800?'

"'Well,' I said, 'I don't know if we want 1,800 goats or not. We might break up the deal. I didn't want the 1,200, but I bought them to get possession of the ranch.'

"'If I don't sell the whole bunch, I won't sell none,' Brazel said. 'If I have to keep any goats, I'll stay on the ranch.'

"Pat got pretty mad at that. 'I don't care whether you give up the ranch or not. I can get you off anyway.'

"'I don't know whether you can or not.'

"About that time I got out to relieve myself. Garrett took the lines. I heard him say, 'Damn you, I'll get you off now.' He was starting to get out of the buggy with his shotgun in his hand when Brazel shot him. He staggered back and fell. He stretched and groaned a little after he fell, and that was all. I took a laprobe and covered him up, and we came on in. Brazel gave me his six-shooter."

By nightfall the day of the shooting the whole territory knew that Garrett was gone—and that all the tale had not been told. Up at the little mountain town of Captain the *News* ran the story and remarked that the account given by Adamson and Brazel was "received with a great deal of incredulity." The editor pointed out that a bullet had entered the back of Garrett's head, coming out over his eyebrow, and a second shot in the breast "could have been fired only when the body was prone on the ground; for the bullet struck near the fourth rib, ranged upward and lodged in the shoulder."

Some people thought Garrett had been shot in the head with a pistol and in the body with a rifle. They observed further that when the sheriff and the coroner got to him, Pat still had a glove on his right hand, as if he had not been expecting to use his trigger finger.

It was whispered also that a horse—and presumably a horseman—had waited just off the road for a long time. The ground was trampled, and horse droppings were scattered about. The whispers also said that Pat himself had been the one to go behind the bush, and that his trousers were still unbuttoned when he was found. These signs pointed to cold-blooded murder. Not one man in ten believed that it all happened just as Adamson said.

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But if Wayne Brazel was not the killer, who was? Bill Isaacs, who shared his room with Brazel during the court proceedings, always believed that Adamson was brought in to do the job for money. It was all carefully worked out. Brazel carried a pistol and a rifle, but the pistol was Adamson's—not his own. They had swapped guns before the journey began. When Garrett started to get out of the buggy, Adamson shot him through the head with Wayne's pistol. Then they exchanged weapons again.

THE version which is almost universally believed in the cattle country gives Jim Miller credit for the killing. He was seen in Las Cruces the day it happened. It was his horse which stood so long just off the road, and it was his bullet that got Garrett in the back of the head. Dee Harkey in his book *Mean as Hell* says Miller was using a horse from the Harkey ranch in the Pecos Valley and that he rode it to death getting away after the shooting.

As more facts came to light, it was learned that Miller and Adamson were related by marriage and that Adamson had been in trouble before. There was no ranch in Oklahoma. The Mexican cattle deal was probably non-existent. It looked more and more as if the goat and cattle business was just a series of phony negotiations prolonged until Garrett could be caught off guard or provoked into a fight.

Miller may well have been brought in by Garrett's enemies. In fact, people are still living who can tell you where and how the bargain was made. Miller himself might have revealed the details—he liked to talk of his exploits. But he himself had only a few months to live. He was involved in the grudge murder of Gus Bobbitt, an Oklahoma rancher, in the spring of 1909. The law caught up with him and he was placed in the Ada jail. At two o'clock in the morning on April 19 a mob cut off the electric power in the town, took Miller and his accomplices out of their cells, and hanged them in a disused livery stable. He died with grim dignity, taking his secrets to the next world with him.

As for Wayne Brazel, he never wavered in his assertion that he fired both shots. He told Harris Walthall, an El Paso attorney, that when Garrett reached into the buggy after his shotgun there was a look on his face that he had never seen on a human countenance before. It was a killer look, and Brazel knew he had to do something. He repeated the tale over and over to Bill Isaacs while he stayed at his place during the trial, and always told it the same way. Finally he said, "Bill, you don't believe a damn word of my story, do you?"

"No," answered Bill, "but it is a good story. Keep saying it over and over and you will believe it yourself. I can't. You're no killer."

THEY buried Pat Garrett on March 5 at three o'clock in the afternoon. The body had been lying at the Strong Undertaking Parlors in an over-size casket which had to be sent up from El Paso. Constant streams of people came to look at him, noting that his features were "only slightly discolored" and staring curiously at "the small bullet hole through the left eyebrow, a little to the left of center and the swollen and blackened condition of the flesh surrounding the eye." While the funeral

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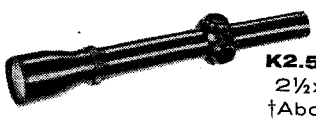
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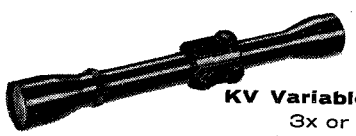
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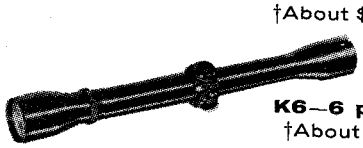
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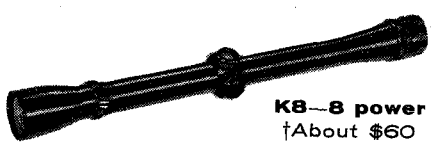
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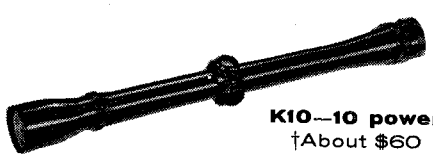
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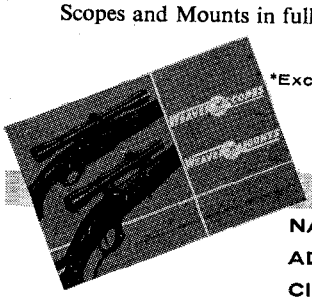

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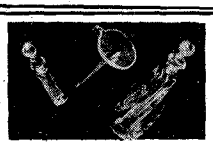

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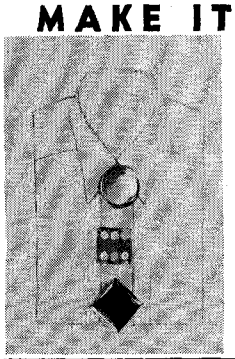

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was delayed for Garrett's brothers John and Alfred to come in from Louisiana, the family received telegrams and letters from President Roosevelt, Emerson Hough, and a hundred other old-time friends. They found a place for more flowers than Pat had ever smelled in his lifetime.

At the graveside in the Odd Fellows' Cemetery the ceremonies were brief and, to many, painful. Pat had been a free thinker or agnostic, a far-off disciple of Robert Green Ingersoll (they called such people atheists in those days) and had wanted no religious ceremony at his funeral. It was decided that his favorite page from the Great Agnostic's works—the eulogy delivered by Ingersoll at the grave of his brother—should be read as the coffin was lowered. Tom Powers, the faithful El Paso Saloon man, volunteered to read it.

"Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud—and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word. But in the night of death Hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing."

Pat had liked the luxuriant roll of that passage.

Somebody else read a page by William Jennings Bryan to counteract the Ingersoll, and Pat was left to his long rest.

Mrs. Garrett and her younger children went back to the ranch, sad and disconsolate. Adamson pranced off to El Paso, where he was to meet Jim Miller. Brazel was left to face the music. On April 13 he appeared before the Grand Jury and was indicted, but Governor George Curry, who had come to Las Cruces immediately after the killing, recommended that he be admitted to bail. In Curry's opinion, and he knew the background as well as any man could, having served as the first sheriff of Otero County, Garrett's death might have been the fuse to touch off more trouble. To lock Brazel up, he thought, "might be a source of ill feeling among his cowpuncher friends."

Bill Cox immediately circulated among the ranchmen and merchants and raised the required $10,000 in less than an hour. Cox said he could have raised a hundred thousand. The names of some of the best citizens of Las Cruces appeared on the bond. Brazel and Cox rode out to Cox's ranch in a mood approaching triumph.

THE last round was almost a joke. Brazel had his trial on April 19, 1909. The prosecution, led by Mark S. Thompson, tried feebly to prove that Garrett's death was the result of conspiracy. A. B. Fall and H. B. Holt, the defense attorneys, argued that Brazel had fired in self defense. The prosecution did not press the points which would have counted most heavily against Brazel—the wound in the back of the head; the upward-ranging shot in the breast—the gloved right hand. And Adamson, the only witness, was not even called to the stand.

It was all done in one day. Brazel told his story at the beginning of the afternoon session, and the case went to the jury at 5:20 p.m. Fifteen minutes later the verdict of Not Guilty was brought in.

By this time W. W. Cox had already bought the Garrett place. The family was out of the country. With Pat six feet under ground it would seem that the chapter was closed. But it is hard to write *finis* to the career of a man like Pat Garrett, even when he is dead. With all his weaknesses and all his mistakes he still stands up tall and sturdy among the sons of the frontier.

It is true that he was no hero. He was no great shakes as a husband and father. The refinements of life meant little to him. He gambled and drank and fought. But he was no coward and no hypocrite, and there was a lot of salt and yeast in him—more than enough to balance his deficits. Hollywood has belittled him. Story-tellers have lied about him. Yet his name is inscribed for future generations among the law-bringers of the West.

Maybe for that reason Pat Garrett's last ride is still discussed and explained in the cattle country and men still wonder just how and why he died.

Christmas, 1848

(Continued from page 25)

crust every few steps. They packed the baggage on their backs. The sled did not work and was abandoned from the start. They soon found about a mile a day was the best they could do, and the cold was so unbearable that they frequently had to take refuge under the shelter of rocks, making a fire to keep from freezing.

They reached the river with high hopes of finding game but the deer and elk had been driven out by the deep snow. Anxiously, they settled down to wait for the relief party, trying to subsist on boiled shoe strings, roasted parfleches and such leather as remained.

New Year's came and went, anything but a happy day. They waited two weeks but the rescuing party did not arrive. Two days later, Fremont with a man named Godey, a strong young Negro called Sanders, and a fourteen-year-old boy who seemed to be standing up amazingly well, started walking on the ice down the middle of the river on a second rescue mission. The others were ordered to follow as they could.

THIS party, moving as fast as they were able, came upon two Indians with some horses several days later, and Fremont engaged them to pilot their group to the nearest settlement. A day or so later they came upon the first rescue party.

King had already died and the other three were deranged and sightless, nearly dead. Fremont had them hoisted on to the Indian horses and carried in to the little Mexican settlement, at the present site of Conejos, Colorado.

It was Godey who collected all the provisions available, hired every Mexican he could, with their mules, and hurried back up the river. Traveling day and night he brought food to the survivors scattered for many miles along the river Eleven men had died altogether, and the wolves and ravens, plentiful now, quarreled over their remains.

The worst off of the men were lifted onto the Mexican horses, but most of the unfortunate men still had to walk. At last their tortured feet would carry them no farther, and for the last twenty miles they crawled on their hands and knees.

At the settlement, plenty threatened to be as hurtful to them as want had

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been before. They ate at all hours of the day and through the night, and were violently ill as a consequence. But no more died.

Colonel Fremont had gone on to Taos to Kit Carson's house where the famous scout immediately sent a rescue party to bring all survivors in where they could be adequately cared for. Their terrible ordeal was over.

It had been a well-equipped party when they started out—thirty-four men, including geologists, botanists, artists and photographers; over a hundred mules with fine saddles and pack saddles; generous equipment and supplies costing more than ten thousand dollars—even a small three-pounder brass cannon. All was lost.

OVER a hundred years later, forest rangers in the area found the Christmas camp. Sled runners, almost rotted away, lie untouched at the edge of the pine forest. Several camp fires were uncovered where they lay under the pine needles. There are stumps four and a half to ten feet high, scattered over an area several hundred feet square, which indicate the great depth of the snow when they were cut.

The little brass cannon which must be somewhere in the vicinity, has never been found, nor have the Spanish dubloons given into Fremont's care on that desolate Christmas day, and undoubtedly buried somewhere along the trail.

Fever for Gold

(Continued from page 15)

Indians who killed his partners returned with fellow tribesmen and did their best to destroy all evidence of gold workings.

Indians no longer infest the Big Horns. The Lost Cabin Mine is as rich as it was the day Hulbert fled it, for no other seeker has ever found it. Immense, vast, broken and wild, the mountain slopes and gulches still hide it. It is possible that some day, some shaggy prospector will uncover the lead that so many predecessors have for so long a time sought. But, no matter, the dream will make hearts beat high long after those made cold by the possession of great riches are rotted to dust.

NOT all the lost mines are famous or ancient. In every mineralized country they are constantly recurring. Along about 1905, a cowboy named Harper who was working for a big outfit in the Milk Weed Flat country of Arizona became so ill with what he thought was bronchitis that he decided to ride to Prescott and see a doctor. He went alone. After passing Peach Springs, he began to feel very weak, and at the third canyon on the left—Daniel's Canyon it is called, from the fact that it used to be a regular den for mountain lions—he turned off to rest. After unsaddling and staking his horse, he saw a buck deer walk out from behind a bush not far away. He thought that some venison might revive him; so he killed the buck, made a fire under a juniper tree, and broiled one of the backstraps.

He did feel better after eating, and idly digging his spurs into the ground while resting, he spurred up a rock that showed gold. He used his spurs some more and turned up a good pocketful of the rich ore. Before riding on he cut the buck's head off and hung the antlers

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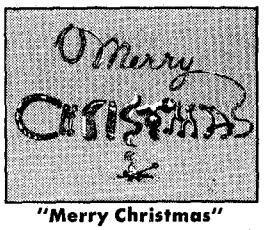

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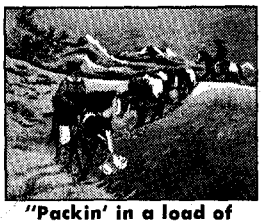

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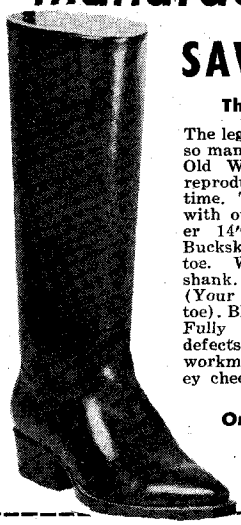

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in the juniper tree as a marker to return to.

In Prescott the doctor told him that he had "galloping consumption" and sent him to a hospital. He was indeed low, and within a few days he sent for his brother. He gave the rocks to his brother, told him exactly where he had dug them up, and died. As soon as the funeral was over, the brother had the rocks assayed. They were incredibly rich. They were so rich that even after a sample had been withheld they sold for enough to pay the doctor and hospital fees and cover expenses of sending Harper's body back to the little town in Texas he called home.

The brother then began to search for the juniper tree in Daniel's Canyon with the deer head on it. He could not find a deer's head in any juniper tree, either in Daniel's Canyon or any other canyon along the route Harper had ridden. Harper could not have been mistaken about the plainly marked tree. The brother took men who knew rocks into his confidence. They looked at and under thousands of junipers of all sizes in all sorts of places. The deer's head could have fallen down and been dragged away by coyotes. A wildcat could have climbed the juniper and dislodged it. A Navajo could have passed along, recognized it as a marker to gold or something else coveted by intruding white men, and removed it. *Quien sabe?*

ONE time I rode two hundred and fifty miles by mule across the Sierra Madre of Chihuahua and Sonora to see a location of the Lost Tayopa Mine made by C. B. Ruggles and to hear his story on the ground. Tayopa has been lost for nearly three hundred years. Realistic producers as well as unrealistic prospectors have looked for it. Expeditions still go out in search of it. In the stories, Tayopa is richer than King Solomon's Mines.

"Ruggles," I asked my story-telling prospector friend, "if your stake proves out, what are you going to do then?"

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Tequila and Gunpowder

(Continued from page 13)

their underwear—holding off the Mexicans. Then, the bandits got a barrel of kerosene from the wax distillery. They soaked bundles of rags in it. Lighting and throwing the crude firebombs at the shack, they were able to ignite the grass thatching on the tin roof.

Inside, the shack was like an oven. The nine soldiers cringed beneath the heat, but kept their positions at the windows. Then they started to break. Pvt. Cohen, unable to stand the heat any longer, scrambled out the window head first. A shotgun blast from ten yards away disintegrated his face. Pvts. Coloe and Rogers simultaneously barreled out another window. Coloe got fifty yards over the rocks before he fell, shot to pieces.

Rogers, firing as he ran, reached the hillside 100 yards away. Suddenly dark shadows rose up from the bushes around him. A scattered series of shots, and Rogers fell. He struggled to one knee. At least twenty of the Mexicans were all around him. Even though he was wounded nine times, Rogers fired into them till his gun was empty. He killed four before he died.

TWO hundred yards from where the six remaining soldiers fought for their lives, the tin building of the wax distillery reflected the glow of the blazing cook shack. Its doors hung ajar where the bandits had torn them open. Nothing inside except the barrel of kerosene had been worth taking. The owners, Cap Wood and Oscar Montel, lived in a hut 300 yards past the distillery.

They had been awakened by the gunfire. They decided to investigate. Better take a roundabout way, they decided. That precaution probably saved their lives. They made a wide circle through the brush toward the troop area. The brush in the Big Bend country is not conducive to night walks, however, and they got floundered in a stretch of cactus. It took nearly two hours to pick their way through the prickly patch. By the time they worked their way back to the area, they knew it was no *Cinco de Mayo* celebration.

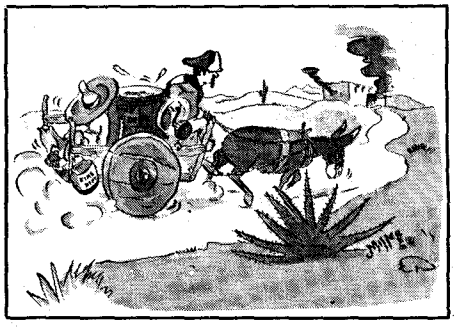
"My God!" whispered Cap Wood. "A raid. We better get help . . ."

He whispered too loud. Three shadows materialized a few yards in front. *"Quién vive?"* shouted the front shadow. *"Quién vive?"*

Wood and Montel froze. *"Quién es?"* replied Wood, hoping it was the correct answer. It was not. It was the wrong answer. *Quién vive* was a standard password among the Mexicans during the revolutions. The correct answer would have been *"Viva Villa,"* or *"Viva Carranza,"* depending on the crowd.

Wood, the instant he answered, heard the click of a pistol hammer. "Run, Oscar!" he shouted to his companion as he dived into the cactus. The blast of gunfire was a second too late. Wood and Montel scrambled through the thorns to the safety of darkness. The Mexicans, without the motivating influence of fear, did not follow them into the cactus. It was soldiers they were after.

AFTER four hours of fighting, Sergeant Smythe and the five remaining troops still had possession of the cook shack. The Mexicans kept a steady rain of gunfire into the building, but the soldiers, only two of them still unwounded, returned the fire and kept the bandits at bay. During the fighting, several of the Mexicans broke into Ellis'



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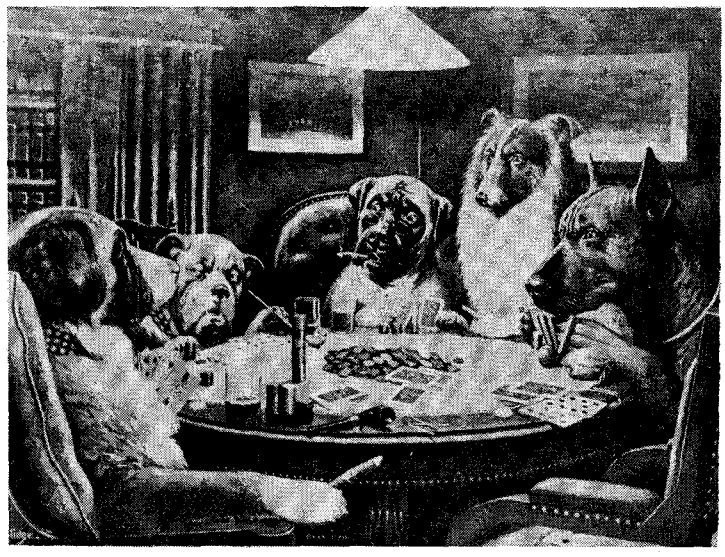


A BOLD BLUFF

store. Only a few minutes earlier, Ellis—who had a wooden leg—and his wife had slipped away. Like excited kids the Mexicans tumbled over the counter in the general store, dragging clothes off the shelves, ripping open sacks.

There was a shout. From the back of the store one of the bandits exuberantly held up a bottle. The others looked, then crowded around him. In a few seconds they all had bottles. Rushing out of the store, they carried armloads of the fiery *sotol* cactus whiskey to their brethren who were beseiging the cook shack.

In less than half an hour there was not a sober bandit. Staggering, crazy drunk on *sotol,* they once more turned their attention to the soldiers. They wanted to kill the Americans, but until now they had not been especially interested in risking their own lives to do it.

After all, what fun is it to be a bandit if you get killed? But now their leader, Rodriguez Ramirez, who, with Natividad Alvarez, a Villista colonel had organized the raid, staggered to his feet from where he had been crouched in a ditch. With one hand he grasped a rifle. With the other he grasped a nearly empty *sotol* bottle. He lifted it to his lips, drained it, and flung it toward the cook shack.

"Mueran los gringos!" he screamed. He scrambled toward the shack. *"Mueran los gringos!"* echoed from others. Kill the Americans! A dozen more staggered in behind Ramirez. Over the rocky ground they surged toward the shack with the still-smoking roof, over the dead bodies of two of their comrades who had died earlier.

When they almost reached the shack, a savage volley of shots poured from all the windows. Even the four wounded soldiers were propped up, dumping lead into the Mexicans.

Ramirez fell dead. Before the disorganized bandits could collect themselves, eight more fell dead. This cooled the ardor of most of the others, who, under the influence of the *sotol,* had decided there were things more fun than fighting. To hell with the revolution, the gringos, the fighting. *Viva sotol!*

At four o'clock in the morning, after almost five hours, the bandits began to withdraw. Part of them crossed the Rio Grande back into Mexico. The majority, however, not being party-poopers, decided they could hold out as long as the *sotol.* They, under Colonel Alvarez, traveled twenty miles down the river—still on the Texas side—to a point above Boquillas, and continued celebrating into the next day.

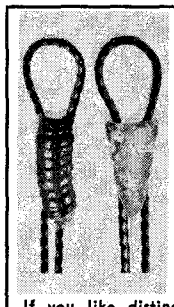
AT daybreak they had an interruption. The unmistakable clatter of a Model T Ford brought the bandits to their guns. They relaxed as the car chugged into sight. It was only one person—a middle-aged, dignified man with a bushy shock of grey hair. He was Doctor Homer Powers, the area physician.

Dr. Powers, who lived at Boquillas, had left at dawn to make a call at the Terlingua mercury mines—seventy-eight miles up the river. When he drove into the band of Mexicans, who were camped all over the road, a few of them were sober enough to explain that he was their prisoner. He was lucky. They would have been happy to kill him, but with his suit and his car, he seemed like a very important *gringo.* They decided to take him along to Mexico and hold him for ransom.

Although he knew nothing of the Glen Springs raid, Dr. Powers soon gathered the story. Soon after his capture, he heard the rattling of gunfire down the river at Boquillas. It was with great relief to Powers, shortly after mid-morning, that the bandit camp had visitors.

Over the rocky road they came, strung out for a quarter-mile, a hundred sombreroed, bandoliered Mexicans on horseback. Trudging along on foot were two prisoners—Jesse Deemer and his hired Negro, Monroe Payne. The bandits, after raiding Deemer's store, decided to take him along and maybe collect a ransom.

Under the encouraging influence of *sotol,* it never occurred to the bandits that *gringo* soldiers would come and punish them. But the word got out. Already telephone wires were buzzing. Posses were being formed. This was Friday afternoon, May 6. Back at Glen Springs, E. K. Ellis, and his wife had managed to slip away during last night's raid. Ellis was a peg-legged man. His flight over the rocky terrain, eleven miles, left his wooden leg a splintered stump.



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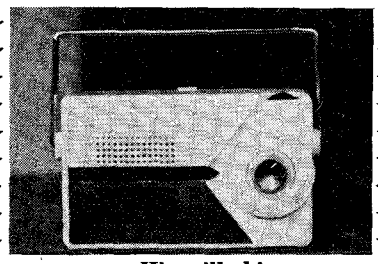

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At daylight on Friday, Sheriff Allen Walton of Alpine got the phone call. He wired El Paso—headquarters of the military district. At El Paso Major George T. Langhorne, Commanding Officer of the 8th Cavalry Regiment, jumped into action. Within five hours, two trains of cavalrymen and horses rolled out of El Paso, headed for the Big Bend, 400 miles down the river.

THE isolation of the Big Bend gave the advantage to the bandits. There was no hurry on their part. It was only when the *sotol* gave out that the Mexicans realized with regret that their party was over. Well, back to Mexico and *la revolutión*.

Putting Deemer and Payne in Dr. Power's Model T, they made him drive it across the river into Mexico. There was one more stop to make—at the Boquillas silver mines. These mines, on the Mexican side of the river in the towering cliffs of the Del Carmen mountains, were run by three Americans. The bandits made Dr. Powers go alone to the diggings in his Ford. When the three miners, who recognized Dr. Powers, left their guns and the safety of the mines, the bandits charged out of hiding and surrounded them.

Three more hostages for ransom. The Mexicans first decided to kill the miners. Luckily there was a truck at the mine which the bandits admired but could not drive. They decided to take the miners along to drive the truck.

Since they now had a truck, there was no need for the Model T. Half of the group went ahead, taking Jesse Deemer and Monroe Payne. The other half remained at the mine. They had a chore to do. Hooking horses to the Ford, they dragged it to the top of a high bluff overlooking the Rio Grande. Laughing and jumping like kids, they released the brakes and let it roll. The car shot forward over the bluff, tumbled end over end, and finally disappeared into the Rio Grande in a mountain of foam. Dr. Powers was not too upset over the loss of his car. He had overheard the Mexicans arguing whether or not to include him in it. Just for laughs.

After loading Powers and the three miners on the truck, the band turned south toward the interior. But because of the impossible Mexican roads the truck was not able to keep up with the horsemen. It continued to fall behind, despite threats from the bandits. Finally, when only eight Mexicans, including Colonel Alvarez, remained with the truck, the Americans managed to get it stuck in sand crossing a dry creek bed.

The Mexicans growled and waved their guns. That did no good. The truck was stuck. Or so it appeared to the Mexicans, who knew nothing about machinery. The driver, racing the motor and clanging the gears, was slipping the clutch just enough to roll the truck gently forward, then back again. Suddenly the engine began to sputter. It died. The driver cranked the starter, but nothing happened. He had the ignition off.

"It needs water," he explained to the Mexicans. "It won't go without water."

The Mexicans went into conference. To go for water, or to shoot the *gringos*—that was the question. They decided to get the water. They could shoot the *gringos* later. Four of them went ahead to a water-hole, leaving Colonel Alvarez and three others to guard the Americans. The driver decided to try starting the truck one more time.

It started. Maybe it was cooled off, he explained to the guards. He would try again to get it out of the sand. He gunned it. No luck—it was stuck fast. Dr. Powers and the other two Americans then got behind and pushed while the driver gunned the motor. This time it surged forward a few inches, but not quite enough to surge out of the sand. Only a little more manpower was needed.

With considerable reluctance the Mexicans laid their rifles against a rock and joined in behind the truck to push. As the seven men shoved with all their might, to the accompaniment of the roaring engine, Dr. Powers suddenly straightened up. "Now!" he shouted. "Gun it!"

The truck lurched forward. The four bandits spilled on their faces into the sand. By the time they clambered to their feet they were staring down the barrels of their own rifles. The miners plowed into the surprised bandits, using the rifles as clubs. After beating them unconscious, they dumped them onto the truck, drove it out of the sand, and took the four captives back to Texas.

THEY reached the north bank of the Rio Grande in time to meet the posse from Alpine. The posse decided not to cross into Mexico until the troops from El Paso arrived. The troops—600 of them—got there at mid-afternoon of the next day. They could not cross the river until they were joined by Major Langhorne.

The Major, chafing with the delay, finally got permission to cross into Mexico. This was an important precedent. Until this raid he had been allowed to chase the bandits only to the banks of the Rio Grande. The Mexicans knew that if they could reach the border ahead of American troops, they were safe from pursuit. But now, May 8, 1916, Major Langhorne, traveling in a huge Cadillac 8, joined his troops on the bank of the Rio Grande.

"We're going into Mexico," he said.

The main group of bandits still held the hostages Jesse Deemer and Monroe Payne. They had not anticipated pursuit. When they learned Major Langhorne and 600 cavalrymen were on their trail, panic began to seep into their ranks. They zigzagged all across the northern wastelands of Mexico. But the Major hung on.

Traveling in his Cadillac 8 he continued to close down the distance. The roads were not automobile roads, but wagon trails—in many places barely passable to wagons. Still, Langhorne and his troops stayed behind the bandits. Closer they got.

Finally, after nearly two weeks, he established contact with the enemy. The Mexicans were becoming more panicky. They swung west from the state of Coahuila into Chihuahua. At the town of El Pino, Chihuahua, the bandits decided to make a stand. They were tired of running—but they were not ready to die, either. They still had their bargaining power. Taking up positions in the sun-baked adobe huts of El Pino, firing from the windows, they stopped Langhorne's advance on the morning of May 22.

In the volley of shots that followed, ten of the Mexicans were killed and Langhorne was able to take the huts at the edge of town. While he was regrouping for another assault, the ban-

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dits sent a villager, under a white flag, into his camp. They wanted peace, the man explained. Give them a chance to escape and they would release Deemer and Payne. Otherwise . . .

The Major chewed his grey moustache. His orders said to rescue the two Americans, but after two weeks of pursuit it seemed a shame not to really punish the bandits. Well, he was a military man. He followed orders.

So it was that after sixteen days in Mexico, traveling 538 miles without losing a single man, Major Langhorne returned to Texas with his mission accomplished.

After the Glen Springs and Boquillas raid the Big Bend was made into a military district. The Sixth Cavalry was sent to Marfa; then a few months later it was replaced by the Eighth—under *Colonel* Langhorne.

Today the establishments of Glen Springs and Boquillas, Texas, do not exist. When the Big Bend of the Rio Grande was made into a national park, they were abandoned. Where Boquillas was, now stands a Ranger station. At Glen Springs is nothing—a few crumbling adobe walls, the ruins of the old wax distillery—occasionally, among the rocks, the broken glass from *sotol* bottles.

Wife of the Chief

(Continued from page 17)

on rainwater collected in rocky waterholes. The captive white girls were treated like slaves, being forced to pack water and fuel on their backs and to help the jeering squaws with other menial tasks. Failure to understand an order resulted in a whipping.

Soon Olive's petticoat wore out. She walked miles to get some bark of trees, matted it together and tied the improvised skirt around her waist, Indian fashion. This seemed to please her captors.

THE Apaches were on friendly terms with the Mohaves, who lived many miles to the south. Occasionally they entertained visitors from that tribe. On one such visit, about a year after the arrival of the Mormon girls, the Mohave chief, Espanesay, took a liking to Olive. She was now a well-developed young woman of fourteen, sweet-voiced and well-mannered, and the chief eagerly sought to buy her as a wife.

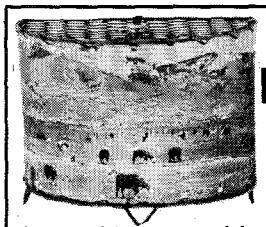
"I will not leave my sister Mary Ann," declared Olive, combining the sign language with a few words of the Apache tongue.

So Espanesay bartered for both girls. The payment finally decided upon was two horses, two blankets and several pounds of white beads—white being the preferred color.

For ten days Olive and Mary Ann, barefooted and naked except for knee-length skirts of bark, journeyed southward with their new masters over rough, mountainous terrain. On the eleventh day they reached a Mohave village on the Colorado River.

Although the chief was fond of his native wife and children, he staged an elaborate wedding ceremony for Olive. (The white girl, belonging to a sect that in those days practiced polygamy, had no religious objection to the marriage.)

Just before the ritual, Olive was tatooed as a chief's bride. A medicine man punctured her skin and rubbed blue dye into the wounds, marking her chin



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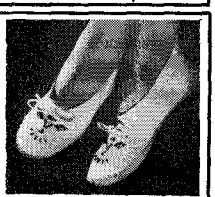

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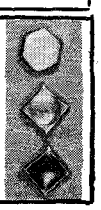

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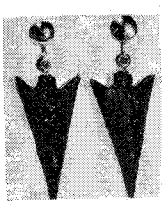

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Albert Law, Editor of the DALHART DAILY TEXAN, said it: "Reading Laura V. Hamner's LIGHT 'N HITCH is more like sitting down in an easy chair, or leaning against a convenient fence post and talking with the people who come alive for you as you turn page after page and find yourself wanting to finish the book before you ever lay it down. Miss Hamner has a positive genius for that kind of writing." (See McMurray's ad, page 2).

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with thin lines that ran obliquely and vertically from her mouth, and tracing a single line on each arm.

As a wife of the chief, Olive lived in Espanesay's lodge, and Mary Ann with them. The Mormon girls were no longer treated as slaves. They were given a patch of ground on which they raised corn, melons and beans. Neither of the girls could swim, so the squaws of the village gleefully tossed them into the river to sink or learn to swim in a hurry. Both girls made it safely to shore and quickly became good swimmers.

Rain fell only at rare intervals in that section of what is now central-southern Arizona, and the Mohaves depended upon the river's overflow for crop irrigation. In 1852 there was no overflow. The whole tribe suffered acutely from famine and many of them perished. Olive, sturdier than her sister, was torn with anguish as she watched Mary Ann waste away and finally die in her arms.

The Mohave custom was to burn their dead. Olive, reared in Christian tradition, insisted upon burying the skeleton-like form of Mary Ann in the parched earth, and Espanesay agreed. Curious Indians helped the chief's white squaw to dig the grave; the first and only one in all the village. With tears streaming down her hollow cheeks, Olive said a little prayer and planted some cactus plants on the sandy mound.

For weeks after Mary Ann's death, Olive walked about the village in a daze. The chief's Indian squaw took pity on her misery and secretly robbed the precious supply of seed corn that had been set aside for spring planting, and gave it to the bereaved and starving girl. This bit of human kindness undoubtedly saved Olive Oatman's life.

YEARS passed. Olive thought often of her past and wondered if she would ever see white people again. Her life with the Mohaves was not unpleasant. Espanesay and his Indian wife were kind to her and the squaws of the village did not resent her presence among them. Often she sang for the chief's visitors—a romantic song or a Mormon hymn remembered from her past, or an Indian chant she had learned at a ceremonial dance. Her beautiful soprano voice delighted the Indians. Sometimes an enraptured visitor showed appreciation by giving the sweet singer a string of beads.

One day the Mohaves began grimly preparing for war on the Cochaquis tribe, their hereditary foes. Reluctantly the squaws took part in these preparations, not wishing their men to risk their lives in battle. They made a large supply of bows and arrows, stone knives and war clubs. The war clubs were hewn painstakingly from the hard, heavy wood of *cooache* trees that grew in the distant mountains.

Olive, too, was sad. She knew the ancient Mohave custom following a battle. If any members of the tribe were killed in battle, the Mohaves would kill an equal number of captives to avenge the slain warriors and appease the tribal gods. Even though Olive was married to Chief Espanesay, her life would be forfeited if one of the painted warriors failed to return to the village.

Almost sick with fear, Olive watched the war party set out for the land of the Cochaquis. A feeling of doom hung over her. Weeks dragged by. Olive forced herself to fashion pottery bowls from clay dug from the river bank and to paint them in bright colors, and waited . . .

Two months later, the war party returned victoriously to the Mohave village. No braves had been lost on the raid and they had taken five captives, all Coachaquis girls or young women. A solemn ceremonial dance, in which only the men took part, celebrated their triumphant return. But stark tragedy marked the ritual. One prisoner fled, was recaptured, and paid the penalty of death by torture. The victim died stoically, without a cry.

Espanesay compelled his white wife to witness the horrible scene as a warning for her not to try to escape. Months afterward, two medicine men who had lost several patients in an epidemic, including a member of the chief's family, were burned to death at the stake. Olive again was forced to watch.

FIVE years now Olive had lived among the Indians, thinking that she was the last living member of her family. She did not know that Lorenzo, her oldest brother, had survived the massacre on the Gila River and had been nursed back to health by kindly Pima Indians. He had been searching for her and Mary Ann ever since.

A Yuma Indian named Francisco came to Fort Yuma with the news that he had seen a white girl living with the Mohaves. Her description fitted Olive Oatman. Lorenzo begged the Army post commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Burke, to send an expedition to rescue his sister.

"I'm sorry," replied the officer, "but I can't do what you ask. Such an expedition could start an Indian war, and I don't have enough men to risk that chance."

Francisco offered to visit the Mohave village himself—for a price—and ransom the white girl. Colonel Burke agreed. A merchant at the fort supplied horses and merchandise to be used as the ransom fee. The messenger set out with the following credentials:

27 January, 1856

Francisco, Yuma Indian, bearer of this, goes to the Mohave Nation to obtain a white woman there, named Olivia. It is desirable she should come to this post, or send her reasons why she does not wish to come.

MARTIN BURKE
Lieut. Col. Commanding
Headquarters, Fort Yuma, Cal.

Upon Francisco's arrival at Chief Espanesay's village, the Mohave leader ordered the squaws to stain his white wife's body from head to foot with a brownish liquid so that she would not be recognized. Then Espanesay called a council of his head men to discuss the matter. Keeping Olive hidden out of sight in a lodge, the council examined Colonel Burke's letter. Of course they could not read it, so that night they asked Olive to tell them what it said. The girl was overcome with emotion at seeing, for the first time in five years, words written in her language. In a trembling voice she read the note aloud to Espanesay.

The Mohave chief did not wish to give her up. At first he insisted to Francisco there was no such white girl in his village. But the Yuma Indian knew better and continued the discussion. After two days of haggling, with the messenger threatening to call in the Army, Espane-

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say capitulated to the point of asking Olive if she wanted to go back to her own people.

"Yes," she said tactfully. "I have been happy here, but I *do* want to go back to my own people."

The chief agreed to barter her at the same price for which he had originally bought the two Mormon girls from the Apaches. Francisco turned over to Espanesay two horses, two blankets and a few pounds of white beads, and the deal was clinched.

Olive then followed Francisco through the wilderness afoot for ten days and ten nights, continually urging him to walk faster, so eager was she to reach the fort. At journey's end she broke down and wept with joy at seeing her brother Lorenzo.

Years later, Olive Oatman became the bride of a white man, John B. Fairchild. She died on March 20, 1903, at Sherman, Texas, with the thin blue tattoo lines of a Mohave squaw still marking her face and arms.

The Beast that Looked Like a Man!

(Continued from page 11)

Broke and in savage humor, the four-time killer decided to try his luck in Canada.

Here Boone Helm's bloody trail fades out for several years. It is known that he wandered clear to British Columbia territory and tried his hand at trapping, but details of his adventures are lacking. We cut his trail again in 1861 when he was arrested by Canadian lawmen on suspicion of murder.

Helm and Angus MacPherson, his trapping partner, had set out with their winter's catch of furs on a two hundred mile trip through the wilderness from their cabin to a Hudson's Bay Company trading post. A three-day blizzard came whooping down from the north, and the partners holed up in a hastily built balsam shelter in the lee of a big rock. On the last day of the storm, still a hundred miles short of the post, their grub ran out. The problem presented no difficulty to Boone Helm . . .

The yellow-fanged giant arrived alone at the post, well-fed, dragging the full load of furs behind him on a toboggan. When the factor inquired as to MacPherson's absence, Boone grinned and declared that his partner had "gone snow-blind and wandered off some place in the woods."

Suspicious, the factor sent an Indian runner hurrying for the authorities. Helm's arrest quickly followed.

Without a corpse to confirm their suspicions of murder, the baffled Crown officers could not make a case against Helm. He got off with a verdict of permanent banishment from Canada. The unlucky MacPherson was never seen again.

EARLY in the summer of 1863, eleven years after his crime-filled wanderings began, Boone Helm finally found a haven at the hell-roaring mining camp of Bannack in Montana. Bannack was the headquarters of the notorious Plummer gang of road agents, whose operations included Virginia City and all the district between the two camps. Helm was welcomed into the sinister outfit and assigned the job of "roadster," specializing in stagecoach holdups.

Henry Plummer, leader of the evil gang ironically dubbed "The Innocents,"

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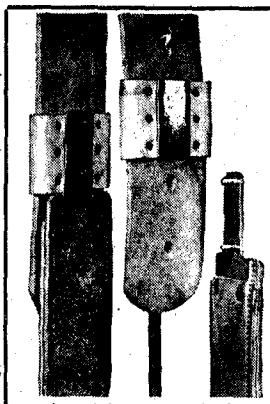

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recognized in Boone Helm a fellow desperado whose villainy matched his own. But Plummer was intelligent enough to fear death, while Helm feared nothing. Plummer remained in the background, a shadowy figure, planning with ruthless brilliance to control the entire territory with violence and terror; Boone Helm, as top trigger-man of the gang, took a bestial delight in carrying out his plan. Together, they comprised a monstrous duo—the crafty bandit chief and the huge, snaggle-toothed, brutish Helm who murdered for kicks.

Shortly after Helm's arrival in Bannack, Henry Plummer got himself elected Sheriff of Bannack District. This political coup was the signal for nearly eight months of the worst campaign of organized crime ever to ravage the Western frontier. Moving swiftly, with almost military precision, Plummer's trained thugs set out to drain off the wealth of the rich mining region. Gold-laden stagecoaches, en route to Salt Lake City, were held up and robbed by bandits who knew exactly when the stages carried gold and how much. Miners, leaving their claims in the hills to visit Bannack or Virginia City, mysteriously disappeared on their way to town. Occasionally, stripped and bullet-riddled bodies were discovered in the brush along the trails; many victims of the murder gang were never found. The body of one gigantic miner known as Bohunk John was found literally torn to pieces, as by a maddened bear.

Sheriff Plummer was not disturbed by this frightful wave of murder and robbery, blandly assuring each committee of frightened citizens calling at the Sheriff's office that he and his valiant deputies were "taking care of everything," and that "very soon now the fiends responsible for these appalling deeds will be brought to justice."

There was no doubt that the Sheriff and his men were taking care of everything, but the suave Plummer made one mistake: he underestimated the intelligence and courage of the citizens of Bannack and Virginia City. With crimes mounting daily and no arrests as promised by the Sheriff, the finger of suspicion pointed straight at the dapper figure of Henry Plummer.

Secretly, the angry citizens met to form a Vigilante Committee, and elected Jim Williams captain. Williams, a tall, quiet man with a stubborn set to his jaw, arose to address the meeting:

"Gents, there ain't a mite of doubt but what we're being slowly destroyed by a mighty clever crook—a crook that we elected Sheriff! There's no use fussin' at ourselves for being stupid—the only thing we can do now is to make a case against Plummer and his gang, arrest 'em and hang 'em. Now let's review the evidence and see how much we have to go on."

Swiftly the evidence was reviewed with each man present eager to talk. Williams himself noted the fact that Plummer's deputies all seemed to have money to throw away right after each big stage holdup. The proprietor of the Virginia City gambling and dance hall, "The Shades," reported that deputy Jack Gallagher had dropped three thousand dollars in gold dust and nuggets in a poker game right after one holdup. Another man remembered hearing deputy Ned Ray boast that he had sent a thousand dollars to a St. Louis jeweler for a diamond ring to present to his "girl friend," a prostitute known as "Madam" Hall. Boone Helm had been observed one night pouring gold dust into the greedy paws of another bawd—pouring it from a buckskin poke with distinctive Indian beading, a poke that once had belonged to a murdered miner, Charley Allen. And the day before Bohunk John's mangled body had been discovered in the brush, Helm had appeared in Bannack with marks on his hands and face indicating that he had recently engaged in a terrific hand-to-hand fight . . .

GRADUALLY, as the months moved along, the Vigilantes gathered additional evidence of Plummer's guilt. In December, 1863, they were ready to move in on the slick, smiling Sheriff and his murderous crew. They decided to arrest the weaker members of the gang first, in the hope of getting confessions implicating Plummer and Helm beyond any possibility of their escaping the rope.

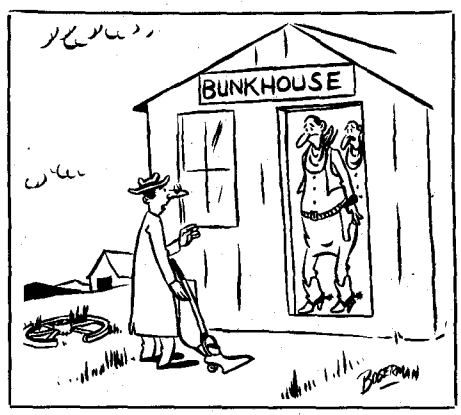
George Ives was the first member of the bandit organization to be arrested and tried for his crimes. Convicted on the specific charge of murdering one Nick Thibault, an unarmed man, Ives was hanged on the night of December 21. He went silent to the gallows.

Red Yeager and George Brown were arrested next. Both thugs were tried for multiple murder and robbery, pronounced guilty and sentenced to hang. Before swinging, Yeager made a complete confession. Among the twenty-six men his sweeping statement implicated were Henry Plummer, "chief," and Boone Helm, "chief roadster."

Now the Vigilantes had the exact information they needed. Grim-faced groups of heavily armed men struck simultaneously at the gang's known hideouts. Ned Ray, Buck Stinson, John Wagner and Henry Plummer were taken into custody without a fight. Each of the four was armed, all had killed without mercy when the odds were in their favor, but not one of them made a move to draw when confronted with Vigilante guns.

Henry Plummer and his three gunmen were tried, sentenced and executed with swift, sure justice. Ray, Stinson and Wagner died without a whimper, but the ruthless bandit chief himself collapsed at sight of the rope.

"Put out my eyes, cut off my ears, but don't hang me!" screamed Plummer, groveling on the snow-covered ground at the Vigilantes' feet. "Oh my God, I'm not ready to die! Send me to prison—send me out into the hills, but please don't hang me . . .!" Sobbing hysterically, Plummer crawled on hands and knees to Jim Williams and kissed Jim's boots. "Jim, we've been friends. Let me go and I'll never come back to these parts again . . ."



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Stony-faced, Williams jerked Plummer to his feet and dragged him to the gallows. With the rope around his neck, the outlaw chief stood dazed and speechless. He died without uttering another word.

Two days after Plummer's execution, on the bright morning of January 14, 1864, Boone Helm stood before the Virginia City Hotel enjoying the sunshine and picking his yellow fangs with a gold-and-ivory toothpick. Vigilantes closed in on him from all sides before he could move to draw a gun. Jim Williams barked "Throw up your hands, Helm!" and the giant instantly obeyed.

"Sure, Jim, sure!" he grinned. "But why arrest me so early in the mornin'? My breakfast ain't hardly settled yet!"

BOONE HELM'S trial that afternoon was remarkable for only one thing —the incredibly brazen effrontery of the defendant. Calmly, Helm denied the charge of murder and robbery leveled against him, swearing on the court Bible that he had never killed a man nor stolen a single penny in his whole life. Kissing the Book, he called upon God to "strike me down dead right where I stand if I ain't tellin' the truth!"

The jury ignored his blasphemous trick. Standing erect, the foreman intoned: "We find the defendant, Boone Helm, guilty of murder and robbery as charged and hereby impose mandatory sentence of death by hanging. We further recommend that the sentence be carried out immediately."

"Worth tryin', anyhow," grinned Boone. "Well, I ain't afraid to die. Give me a drink of whiskey—and then go get your g . . d . . . rope!"

Cracking ribald jokes, while his pal Jack Gallagher went cursing to his doom before him, Helm was made ready for the scaffold. Coolly he watched Gallagher writhe and twist at the end of the rope. "Kick away, Jack. I'll be in hell with you in a minute!"

Atop the packing-box scaffold, Helm spoke quietly to the executioner. "Bill, fix that knot so the rope will break my neck for sure, will you? I don't quite fancy chokin' to death."

"Sure, Boone," replied the hangman, settling the knot firmly beneath Helm's left ear.

The giant drew a deep breath and stood looking out over the crowd toward the snow-covered hills as if he wanted to fix them firmly in his mind in his last few seconds on earth.

Suddenly he bawled, "Every man for his principles! Hurrah for Jeff Davis! Let 'er rip!"

The executioner moved to pull the box from beneath his feet, but Helm spat disdainfully at him and jumped to his death.

I Found a Lost Mine

(Continued from page 9)

ally, "the mine I'm working now is a very rich one. It may have been worked by your grandfather many years ago—sure. It has also been worked by many other men over the years. But it was lost for centuries and I found it. So it's mine now. *Sabe?*"

"Si, senor," he replied—but I had the feeling he didn't understand at all; just sat there looking at me with those big black eyes of his.

"I also own the mine where the stone fence and cabin are," I continued, "and that place may also have belonged to

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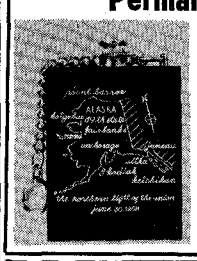

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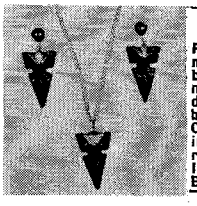

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your ancestors. You can have that mine if you want, but it isn't worth working."

"I know that, *senor,*" he smiled. "I have no interest in those two mines."

"You're looking for the silver mine, then?" I prodded. "I, too, have looked for it—in vain."

The boy shrugged. "No, *senor,* I do not look for that one either."

By this time the conversation was beginning to nettle me a mite. "Then you've come up here from Mexico to find the gold mine on the desert—the mine the Pimas covered up at the time of the massacre of your people!"

At this, he jumped to his feet and his eyes flashed fire. "*Si*—that is the mine I have come to find! And why not, since it *belonged* to my people?"

I rolled him a cigarette and poured him a cup of coffee and motioned for him to sit down and cool off. "Take it easy, son," I said. "Nobody's going to rob you of what's rightfully yours. Now tell me all you know about this mine and we'll work out a deal to find it. From what I hear, there's enough gold there for both of us."

The kid was quiet for a spell while he smoked his cigarette and drank his coffee. He was composed when he spoke again, and the story he told was interesting.

THE desert mine he sought was rich beyond belief—so rich the ore was wired together with gold. The Pimas had not covered up all the vein, as his great-great-grandfather had returned years after the massacre of his comrades and dug out one burro load of ore from a spot he had discovered shortly before the Indians attacked. (Four men had escaped, among whom was his great-grandfather, who was a youth of eighteen at the time.) This rich spot was in the side of a small, rocky rise several hundred yards from the main workings. It was well marked and he was sure that he could find it. True, he had not found it on his way here, but his directions were from the head of the mountain out to the mine, according to the old map he had.

"One thing you haven't figured on," I reminded him. "That mine is on the Pima reservation, and the Indians wouldn't let you or anybody else work it. You could get hurt if they caught you at it."

He shrugged again. "*Quien sabe?* I can but try, *senor.* It will be as God wills. I need only a little of the very rich *oro.* Would not *Los Pimas* allow me to take just what my burro can carry?"

"Not a chance," I told him. "They'd catch you for sure, take the gold away from you and maybe kill you. The best you could hope for would be to get chased back into Mexico."

"Nevertheless, I must try," he insisted. "But I cannot do any searching unless I have food to sustain me. Will you let me have the food and take my money? I realize, of course, that it will not be enough."

"Okay," I agreed. "But I'll only take half your money in payment. Or, if you wish, I'll take a copy of the map and consider myself well paid."

"No, *patrone,*" he replied firmly. "I promised my father that I would not give the map to anyone nor let anyone see it. I swore that I would defend it with my life. But I did not swear that I would never *tell* anyone where the mine is located."

He rose to his feet, turned and pointed. "The rich mine is on the point between two washes just below yonder peak. Now, *senor,* if you will give me the food, I will be starting on my journey."

He shook hands with me before mounting his burro. After riding only a short way, he turned in his saddle and called, "*Adios, patrone. Muchas gracias y vaya con Diós.*"

I never saw the boy again, but I have a hunch that he did find the "rich spot," removed a burro load of ore and made it safely back to Mexico. He was that kind of kid; tough, game and intelligent. Lucky, too. Naturally, I planned to track him to the desert mine, but I made a bad error in judgment. Mistrusting my own ability as a tracker, I went to get Comet's Tail, Chief Six's son, who was an expert at that ancient craft. But Nature came to the kid's assistance with a heavy rain, washing out his burro's tracks. Before I got back with Comet's Tail, the task was beyond even his great skill. If I had tracked him myself, I might have discovered the rich desert mine. But perhaps it was meant to be the way it turned out. *Quien sabe?*

EVENTS were moving fast for me about this time. I wrote and published my book on lost mines, acquired some good dope on the mines of Tumacacori, and had several other irons in the fire. I decided to try my luck and knowledge at finding the Tumacacori mines.

Much has been written on lost mines in the twenty years since the appearance of my book on the subject. In the book *Lost Mines of the Great Southwest,* the following appears:

"Old documents still in existence claim that the mine called 'The Virgin Guadalupe' belonged to Tumacacori. It measured one league from the big gate of the Temple to the south and west; and from the waters of the San Ramon, it measured 1,800 *varas* to the north. In a southerly direction to the west, there are two peaks torn down by powder being placed in the rocks. The signs remain blotted out and people could pass over these rocks treading on the values and never see them. The enclosure is 50 *varas* square, covering up the treasure inside and outside the mines.

"Follow straight ahead through the pass in the mountains to the south about three leagues from the Guadalupe mine. To the south of this pass runs a creek that passes by the old town of Santa Cruz. The mine is to the left of the pass. From the Guadalupe to this mine—which is called the Pure Concepcion—it is three leagues. This mine has a tunnel 300 *varas* long that has the name of the Pure Concepcion cut in the rock over the mouth of the tunnel.

"Halfway between the Guadalupe and the mine called Pure Concepcion is the mine called the Opata. This mine has a tunnel 400 *varas* long running to the south. From the south of this mine runs a long mesa in the direction of the setting sun. From the Opata it is a league to the mine called Tumacacori. This mine is to the west and on the other side of the mountain. There is a copper box that has a key and in one corner there is a screw. Take out the screw and pull out the iron bar and open the box. There will be found all the maps of the treasure and mines.

"The mine called San Pedro is a league and a half from the side of the Temple to the west, and when the sun is rising it strikes in the mouth of the tunnel.

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"The mine called Isabella is one league to the north of the San Pedro. From the San Pedro, a trail descends to the Guadalupe and then follows a canyon to the south and reaches the spring of San Ramon."

Many variations of the above are in existence. Confusion appears in the distances given; also in the directions, which sometimes read left and sometimes right. Old Spanish maps do not help, as they are so inaccurate as to be virtually worthless. The Spanish league of that day was never over two and one-half miles, but in most cases was much shorter.

A study of old documents and diaries of Spanish *padres* reveals much fascinating information to the modern gold seeker. For example, the whole of the area in the vicinity of what is now Nogales, Arizona, and Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, was called Arizonac (The C was not sounded, hence Arizona.) This is an Aztec name, meaning the country of many rocks.

Many old shafts and tunnels worked by the Spanish and later worked by the Americans, showed the marks of stone tools. In some mines which had caved, the old stone tools were found along with the skeletons or bones of Indian miners. The Aztecs worked both gold and silver and were adept in the art of smelting and fashioning the metal. The Spanish conquerors took over the mines from the Aztecs and proceeded to work them. After the soldiers came the *padres*.

Protection from the natives was necessary, so the Spanish soldiery established *presidios*, or forts, at strategic locations throughout the area. Towns later grew up around the *presidios*. The *padres* founded missions among the Indians, usually in areas which could be cultivated. The first concern of the *padres* was saving the souls of *los Indios;* their second concern was to obtain mineral wealth from the mines to finance this worthy project. In the country of Arizonac, both Indians and mines were plentiful—a fertile field indeed for the zealous priests. Most zealous of all the dedicated *padres* was Father Kino, who founded Tumacacori Mission and many others.

THE map accompanying this series of articles shows the approximate location of the famous Planchas de Plata silver and placer mine area which first attracted the wealth-hungry Spanish. The *Presidio* of Arizonac and the *Presidio* of Santa Cruz were first established in the area. The earliest mission in Arizona was the Jesuit mission San Rafale de Guevavi. Later the mission Tumacacori, named by Father Kino after the Cocomaricopa Rancheria San Matias del Tumacacori, was founded. (Some historians think that there was an upper mission founded in the Sierrita Mountains, but there are no documents to support such a claim.) *Visitas* were founded in the outlying territory, which the good *padres* visited at intervals. These *visitas* were founded at the *presidios* and at the mines or in a central location near a group of mines. Trails led from mission to *visita* to *visita,* thence back to the main mission or headquarters.

The problem confronting the modern prospector in finding these old Spanish mines was to locate the *visitas*. Even then you would have no guarantee of success, since in some places the mines

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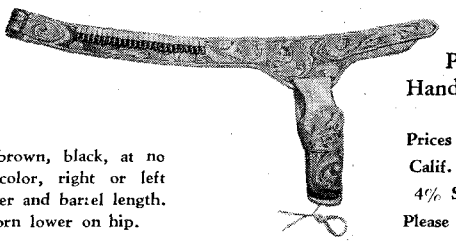

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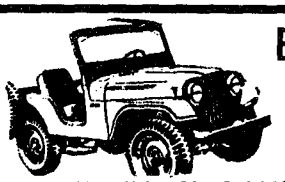

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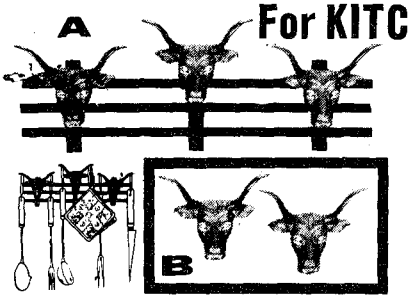

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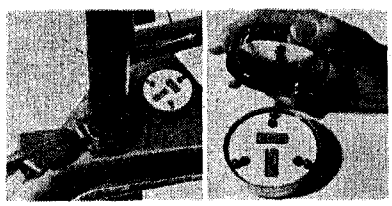

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might be anywhere in the surrounding area. Perhaps in one location there might be a number of mines on the same vein system, or several vein systems in a larger area. In the directions quoted, the waybill given may have been to a number of mines on one vein system, all close together in a small area, or to a number of mines widely dispersed. The league distances between mines as given might be false leads. Also, in the waybill there is no mention of a church, mission or *visita*, but there *is* mention of a Temple. When the Spanish use the word Temple, they refer to the Aztec Temples or places of worship. All these things must be taken into careful consideration.

I drew a map of all known landmarks in the area, such as the map shown here, but on a larger scale. Then I made a reconnaisance of the whole area, getting a picture of the country in my mind. Then, with a prospector partner, I set out to make an intensive search.

(To be continued next issue)

Truly Western

(Continued from page 29)

myself an authority on the Old West, by a long shot. But I have done some research on the matter, and my ancestors knew it intimately. My grandparents and my father were raised on the frontier; my great-great-aunt drove a covered wagon across the Plains. I personally have talked with many old-timers who still clearly remember the Old West. With these credentials, I would like to ask Mr. Pace the following questions:

Who were the rugged men who hammered railroad spikes, swinging heavy sledge-hammers from ten to twelve hours a day, six or seven days a week, building a railroad that welded our country together? The gunfighters? No, Cuzzin Russell, *they* just held up the trains after the work was done. Who were the families who gave up homes and position back East to tackle a new country; who planted seeds in the sun-baked ground and prayed for just enough rain to provide food for the family? Who were the men who crossed the wild, unknown lands, surveying towns and farms so the vast Western country could be mapped with accuracy for the emigrants that followed? Who were the men, both in uniform and not in uniform, who had to keep law and order in this great new land? Who were the men, saddle-sore after weeks of trail-driving, who brought the cattle to this new land? Whose were the sweaty, callused, sun-burned hands who built an empire out of a desert, a prairie, and desolate mountains? Surely not the gunfighters—for if they had done these worthy things, they would have had little time to kill or rob.

You want a picture of a typical Western family, Mister Pace? Let me paint the picture so that even *you* can understand . . .

They lived in a one or two-room shack which they built with their own hands. They owned a couple of horses, maybe a cow or two. The husband was rarely seen without a hoe in his hand, or a sack of grain or cow-feed. No six-shooter about his waist, Mister Pace; he owned a rifle or shotgun, with which he tried to keep the dinner table supplied with meat and fowl. His wife usually owned but one dress, and it was patched and faded. Beside her house-work, she helped bring in the crops or run the store or cooked for the ranch-hands. If they had kids, they were half-naked but quickly learned to fend for themselves. The husband may have been a sod-buster or a ranch-hand or maybe even owned some cattle of his own. Maybe he sold hardware in town or taught school or he might have been even a saddle-bum, a drifter. But one thing is sure—he wasn't a gunfighter, this man of the Old West. He was a man who worked hard at whatever his hands found to do, and his courage did not smell of whiskey. Of course there were exceptions—there always are, but that did not alter the fact that the majority of citizens in the Old West were decent, hard-working folks trying to make an honest living.

Turn away from your two-bit pocket books and your TV set, Mr. Pace, and take a good look at this *True West* magazine. Come out of your dreamland and read Western articles that are authenticated. Talk to people who lived in those times—if any of them returned to the armchair comforts of Maryland. This magazine has a title, Mr. Pace—TRUE WEST. If this magazine ever misrepresents that title, subscriptions will drop by fifty or seventy-five percent—not double 100 percent, as you seem to think.—John C. Neeley, 911 N.E. Hazelfern Place, Portland 12, Oregon.

Excerpts From Other Letters

Dear Joe:

Current issue TW received today. I read the letters first. This feller Russell Pace burns me up, and I am glad you slapped his wrist.

I have been in the West most all of my 68 years. It was pretty well tamed when I arrived, but danged if there warn't more to it than just gun-slingin' and shootin'. There was a lot of that, of course, and some of it pretty shameful, but the work that made this a fit country to live in consisted of far more than just gunnin' down the feller that didn't agree with you.

There was hard work with the cattle and hosses . . . It took sod-breakin', and hoein' and diggin' and sweatin' to make this country fit for civilized folks to live in.

So my vote is for having TW cover all aspects of the Old West, like you've been doing. And I believe you will find more folks loving TW that way than if you confine it to glorifying the gun-toters.

Incidentally, my Pappy was a gun-totin' deputy sheriff in Indian Territory, but he liked to talk more about the cattle and the settlers and the Indian's way of life than he did about gun-fightin' and sich.—Leon (Buck) Dial, Postmaster, Dinuba, California.

Dear Editor:

This isn't just a letter, it's a ballot. In the April, 1957, issue, reader Russell Pace made the statement: "The Old West means, in a word, gunfighters." To me it seems incredible that such a mixed-up concept could occur to anyone.

The old-time gunslingers and outlaws were immature, maladjusted men who fell in two categories—those who expected to get a living by stealing it instead of earning it, and those who had a neurotic grudge against society. If these unwholesome characters had lived in some other time and place, the world would have taken little notice of them. The fact that they happened to live in the

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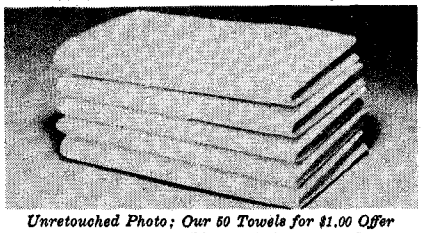

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1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Joe Austell Small, 3303 Bridle Path, Austin, Texas; Editor, Fred Gipson, P. O. Box 266, Mason, Texas; Managing editor, none; Business manager, none.
2. The owner is: Joe Austell Small, 3303 Bridle Path, Austin, Texas.
3. The known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

(Signed) JOE AUSTELL SMALL, Publisher

Sworn to and Subscribed before me this 4th day of September, 1958.

A. D. Leshikar
Notary Public

(Seal) (My commission expires June, 1959.)

Old West doesn't automatically make them glamorous figures. They don't deserve their fame.

As to the lawmen, most of them were fine men doing a job that had to be done. Some, however, had a little too much violence in their makeup. It's one thing to shoot an outlaw because it's necessary; it's another thing entirely to *enjoy* gunfighting.

The gunfighters were an authentic part of the Old West, and as such have a place in your magazine. But please don't concentrate on them. Let's have a well-rounded picture of all the people and events that made the West what it was.—Billie (Mrs. Joseph) Nelson, 748 Kathryne Avenue, San Mateo, California.

Dear Joe:

I have just read the howl of Mr. Russell Pace and it seems I just can't keep my nose out of the controversy. I didn't get here in Wyoming until 1894, a little late, but I did see some of the Old West that was. In fact, the Old West did not sing its death song until the grazing section Homestead Law of 1915 finished it off. By the time I got home from World War One, the change was here to stay . . .

True, in the old days we had gunfighters; also some fine fearless lawmen. But how about the cowpuncher, the freighter, the nester, the trapper, the prospector, the stage-driver and the sheepherder? All these men were far more representative of the Old West as it actually was than the gunfighters . . . It sure gives me a laugh when some young sprout tries to tell some old-timer how the Old West *really* was!

Don't get me wrong—I didn't write this just in hope of getting my name in print. I don't give a damn if I ever see that or not, but I do want to ask you to keep *True West* as it is, with a little of everything that is part of the West.—W. E. Curtis, Big Piney, Wyoming.

Dear Norm:

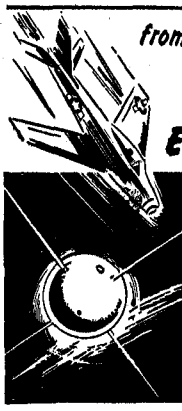
. . . Right off, I'll cast my vote for the little known men *and* women whose names don't appear in print every time you open a magazine. I especially liked the story about old Ben Lilly, the great bear hunter. I'm *sick* of the Earps, Hickoks, Calamity Janes, etc. I don't think the truth will *ever* be known about them; there has been too damned much bull shipping about them through the years . . .—Don Davenport, Myrtle Point, Oregon.

Well, folks, that's the way it went—99 and nine-tenths percent. We'll just repeat our pledge of the first issue: "To the best of our ability, we are going to publish an honest magazine on the West as it really was and is." And now, let's see if we can clear up this Tom Mix ruckus and get back to the usual normal state of confusion around these diggings.

Dear Norm:

I was getting quite a bang out of Jack Armstrong's letter on Tom Mix till I come to the place where he said Tom's horse Tony was black. **(Jack didn't say it. As a kid, we'd seen some of Tom's movies. That was in the days before color film, so naturally Tony showed up black. We goofed when we added that little editorial note in parenthesis, like this one.)**

Tony, the horse that Tom Mix rode to fame, was shipped into Los Angeles about 1913 or '14 with a bunch of mustangs from Nevada. As a colt, he was



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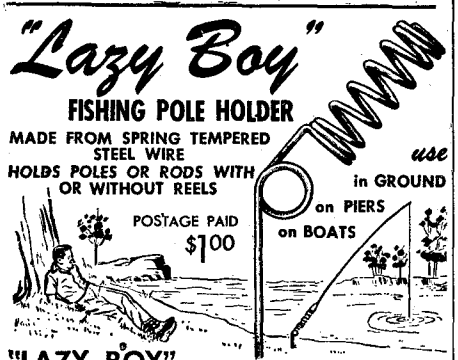

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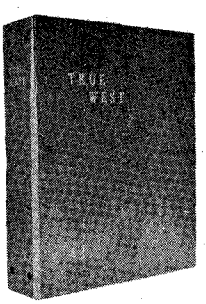

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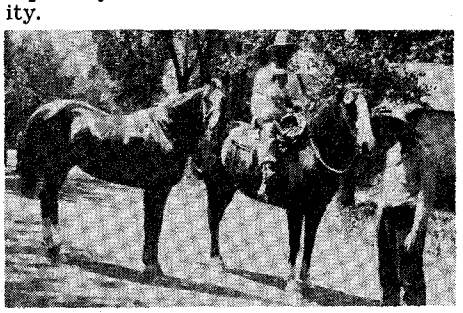
sold at auction to a boy in Edendale, who later sold him to Pat Christman. He was a chestnut sorrel with a white strip in his face and two white hind stockings (see photo).

I got a laugh out of Jack referring to his close association with Mix, which is just another way of saying that he once worked as a five dollar a day extra with Tom. His yarn about the gunsel Mix nearly getting two top hands killed was good, too. While not impossible, I would say it was highly improbable. Most men stomping out a bunch of broncs would consider it a black mark against their rep as a top hand if they let some gunsel jockey them into a position where their life was in danger.

But the joke I liked best was the one about the .45 Colt and the shirt pocket. Why that poor Pistol Pete with the .45 might have stood right there till he starved to death if our hero Two-fingered Jack hadn't come along when he did. What a thriller that would have made for a movie scene!

The one thing that Jack *did* say that I'm sure was true, was that he sat in the grandstand at Prescott and watched the show. In my opinion, that is a hell-uva good place for a cowboy to be—especially if he is a little short on ability.



Tom Mix's horse Tony who carried the controversial screen star to fame.

Some time in the early 1920's, a character showed up in Edendale—which was a favorite hangout for a lot of movie cowboys in the early days of pictures, and is just over the hill from what was once Mixville. His first name was Jack and he had a couple of fingers missing from his right hand. He hung around for awhile, but certainly never displayed any extraordinary ability. I don't know when he left or why, but the movie company bore up under his loss and kept right on making pictures.

I will admit that I never cared much for Tom Mix; he was a hard man to understand and had a way of keeping you at a distance. But I believe in giving the Devil his due, and if these stories about Tom keep on getting bigger and better, it is apt to reflect on the integrity of the F.B.I. for letting such a character run at large so long.

I don't care if Tom Mix was ever a range cowboy or not. Personally, I doubt that he ever was, but it certainly was no handicap to him in his climb to fame as a movie star . . . In my book, you just can't be yellow through and through and have a lot of guts too. Tom Mix certainly had guts, at least when it come to doing stunts. He *never* used a double for stunts.

Dick Hunter remembers Tom Mix very well. At eighty-three, Dick is in good health and his memory is excellent. He was a top hand, and was probably with Tom Mix longer than any other person, and closer to him than most men ever got. He worked with Tom for several years when he was with other small picture companies, and was in stock and worked in every picture that Tom made while on the Fox lot. In Dick's opinion, Tom was a good hand with horses and says that he never saw Tom abuse a horse. Dick can't recall that he ever saw or heard of this Two-fingered Jack Armstrong. As he remembers it, Ed Hendershot was the only one of Mix's men to win any money at the previously mentioned Prescott show. Ed won a consolation bronc riding.

Another thing: The legend that Tom Mix was a born Texan is just as phony as most of the stories told about him. According to cowboys who worked with Tom when he was with the Sells Floto Circus, he was born in Newark, New Jersey, of Pennsylvania Dutch parents.

It seems to be human nature to want to throw stones at the guy on top of the ladder, even if he happens to be long dead . . . But let's keep it clean. If you were there and have a true story to tell, let's have it. Otherwise, skip the gossip and second-hand stuff. TW is trying to keep the records straight on all these famous figures, so let's all do our best to help them do the job.—Spike Spackman, 9150 Emperor Avenue, San Gabriel, California.

Dear Norm:

I was interested in reading Jack Armstrong's letter about Tom Mix. It is true that not many people know the true story of Tom Mix. I am no cowboy, but an old-time skinner (teamster). I worked for big shows and carnivals around the country. The old-time skinners are like the old-time cowboys—they are all about gone.

But to get back to Tom Mix . . . I trapped and hunted in Pennsylvania near where Tom's father and mother lived on Medix Run close to Dubois. Tom got to be a big movie star and made a lot of money, but he neglected his parents, leaving the poor old couple to die in the poorhouse. Later he came to Dubois at fair time. The people were very angry at him and told him to leave town before sunset. He did, going to Brookville twenty-two miles away before he could find lodging for the night. He never came back to Dubois again. We never missed him, either.

No matter how great a hero Tom Mix might appear to movie fans, he was never a hero to the folks back East who knew him best. I saw him run out of town that time and I know that he was a sorry excuse for a man. No decent person would do what he did, that is very certain.

If any old skinners or cowboys read this, I would like to hear from them. I am alone in the world and have few people to talk to.—Harry Shahan, P.O. Box 62, Hubbard, Ohio.

Dear Editor:

I am always amazed at man's inhumanity to man; his downright jealousy of anybody who succeeds where *he* fails. I am referring to Two-finger Jack Armstrong's letter about Tom Mix . . .

When are the yokels going to learn the difference between a cow-waddy and a motion picture star? Of course they play by different rules. They have to.

Two-finger Jack says that Tom Mix would not let any of his men outshine him in pictures. Somebody should inform him that Tom's bosses insisted that their star *be* the star of every film. Tom had good looks, nerve and brains—and don't

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we just wish *we* had some of the millions he made!

Any celebrity must shake loose from women who become a nuisance. The world is full of plain people; they are a dime a dozen. And any famous person tries to keep clear of people who wish to crawl all over him.—G. Stokes, Santa Rosa, California.

Dear Norm:

Seems like I really stirred up the cow chips with my letter about Tom Mix. Showman? Yes. Movie cowboy? Certainly. Undoubtedly Tom Mix was the all-time great in this field. I don't wish to be derogatory of Tom Mix; I simply want to keep him in the corral in which he belongs . . .

I have always been under the impression that a cowboy was a rugged character who could top a salty bronc on a cold morning, rope an outlaw steer, build or repair a fence, ride broncs for Sunday past-time and dog steers after my good friend Bill Pickett showed them it could be done. I don't say Tom Mix couldn't ride—after all, he had lots of years to learn how—but that still doesn't make him a cowboy.

Inevitably, I suppose, many half-truths and distortions of fact have been related about Tom Mix. Several writers have insisted that he was a deputy sheriff, deputy U.S. Marshal, and a Texas Ranger. I was told by a former Captain of U.S. Rangers that Mix had a commission as an Honorary Ranger, which means about as much as my own commission as Honorary Colonel. If there were any truth to these reports, these "authorities" should be able to give dates and places of his law enforcement career. Also, some of these authorities should be able to supply dates of service, serial numbers and outfits for the four wars Mix was supposed to be in—and all in less than four years! Until that proof is forthcoming, I shall continue to regard Tom Mix's law career and military service as a mere press agent's pipe dream.

Other writers have intimated that Colonel Miller's reason for saying Mix was no cowboy was caused by Mix not paying the judgment due him. In many years' association with Colonel Miller, I never found him the kind to belittle a man's ability because of anger with him. I was at the 101 Ranch at the time suit was won against Mix, and was there when settlement was finally made for a small portion of the actual judgment. Payment was made in 1934 in the office of L. H. Wentz, Ponca City, Oklahoma. I suspect that some of these writers would be rather peeved at anyone who owed them a judgment and wouldn't pay it and had earned more than $6,000,000. (This is the figure Gene Autry claimed Mix earned.)

I don't wish to turn the columns of your magazine into a vehicle for carrying on an exchange of personalities, but I must say that Mr. Bryan must suffer from confusion. For his information I never was a newspaper kid anywhere, and I was certainly far beyond the kid stage when I first met him around 1930. So far as I know, Bryan has lived near the 101 Ranch all his life, knew many people that I knew there, and could have gotten the same information as I had from them.

Colonel Zack Mulhall, whom I knew also, was far from a joke in any county. He was the father of Lucille Mulhall, one of the GREATS in rodeo . . .

I never heard of Wyatt Earp being in Oklahoma, but it could be that he was. Or maybe Mr. Bryan knew him somewhere else, before Wyatt died in 1929. Also I never heard of Bill Pickett dogging a buffalo, but could be he did. I know that he did have charge of the 101 Ranch buffalo herd for many years, that he did dog steers with his teeth, and that the steer didn't come too big or too mean for him to tackle. Maybe, as Mr. Bryan states, Bill Pickett was no cowboy either—but if he wasn't, he surely had the Miller Brothers fooled for a long time!

I have never claimed to be a cowboy or to know "which end of a cow went up to the stump." But when Mr. Bryan says that Colonel Miller didn't know any more than that, he sort of riles me up . . . Even Zack Miller's worst enemies, who knew anything about stock, conceded that he had no peer as a judge of cattle and stock, and that goes for my money too.—C. A. Dill, Route 2, Vinita, Oklahoma.

WE'RE SNOWED!

HELP! We need something from you boys real bad. We need some *understanding*. You men are shooting *first* and asking questions *later!* You readers, writers, artists, bullwhackers, dry-gulchers, bellyachers, angels, etc. PULEEZE don't scream like a sore-tailed bear on a cactus needle if your letter isn't answered immediately!

I tell you folks, we're plumb excited over our mail! It's a healthy sign. But also it's getting to be a real problem. We just flat love your letters but it's a little like the old boy who loved hundred dollar bills. They put him in a tall box and started pouring bills on him. When those wonderful things got over his head and he started smothering to death, he was torn between just flat dying with delight or asking them to hold off just a little . . .

Now you just keep right on sending in those letters, articles, etc. We'll hire more help; we'll work our way out somehow. Just don't feel personally insulted if we can't answer you immediately. Thanks!

Editor's Note:

Space limitations prevent us from printing other letters received on Tom Mix. Short quotes from various letters follow:

Red Campbell, 310 Calumet, Dallas, Texas, who joined the Mix Show in 1934 as a property boy: "I never heard Tom mention anything about cattle range experience, but I have heard him recount adventures along the "iron trail" when he rode the freights throughout the Southwest before he went into pictures. This seems to bear out Sam Henderson's contention in his letter in 'Truly Western' that Tom Mix was a hobo when the West was still wild."

M. S. (Nib) Dallison, 817 Dogwood Lane, Fayetteville, Arkansas: "The first time I saw Tom Mix was in 1909-1910, when he was a peace officer or U.S. Marshal. He met the Santa Fe passenger train coming into Dewey, Oklahoma, from Kansas one evening and took off two law-breakers. Tom wore a blue serge suit and a black Stetson and packed one or two Colts . . . Later I saw him many times when he was the ramrod for his father-in-law, Dave Stokes, on the old Flying Z Ranch . . . I see no reason to doubt Tom's ability as a cow-hand. We *know* he was a good horseman."

J. E. Tompkins, R.F.D. Box 148T, Ojai, California, points out that Tom

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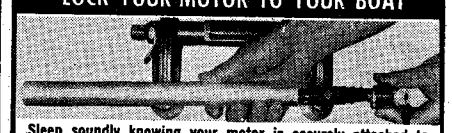

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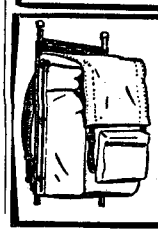

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Mix must have led a clean life to have performed the dangerous stunts required of him in pictures. Mr. Tompkins repeats the claims that Tom Mix was a marshal in Oklahoma and also elected sheriff of Montgomery County, Kansas. He also states that Mix received a decoration for a famous ride in the siege of Ladysmith, in the Boer War, and was wounded fighting as a sergeant in the Boxer Campaign in China. Mr. Tompkins, however, offers no documentation in support of these claims. His letter also notes that Mix was born near Dubois, Pennsylvania, in 1879.

Now, folks, what do you say we let Russell Pace off the hook for a spell and allow Tom Mix to rest in peace? It's been fun, but enough's enough!

Harness Race

(Continued from page 20)

I was crouched down on the carpeted floor, holding onto the dashboard and leaning out, blinded by the mud splashing in my face. I was hollering, calling to the two horses, yelling at them to git, git, git! I was so close I could reach out and almost touch Nip's rump, calling to them for the last bid, half sobbing and bawling with strong emotion.

The wild, cheering roar of the crowd closed in from all sides, heedless of the mud and water that drenched them.

I knuckled the mud out of my eyes with one hand and looked around. Bob's team was a length away, almost scraping hubs with Will's rig. It was a race between the two teams for second place. I was reminded of the chariot race in *Ben Hur*.

The Tucker bays were a buggy length ahead when we crossed the finish line. B. D. Phillips, standing on a chair was waving his hat, letting out a war whoop, yelling like an Assiniboine. He had a stop watch in his hand as we finished a daylight length ahead.

I grabbed Nip's tail that had come undone, pulled it over the dashboard and hung on. Out of the corner of my eye I saw father lift his whip in a salute as we crossed the finish line.

"YOU did fine son," father's unsteady voice sounded a long way off in my mud-plastered ears. "Get back up on the seat and take the lines."

Never, if I live to be as old as Methuselah, will that moment ever come again. A horseman's victory, shared by as fine a span of horses as ever gave the best that was in the heart of a thoroughbred. And when father put the lines into my muddied hands, entrusting the Tucker bays into my care, he gave me something that was beyond value. He passed on his horsemanship and love for a horse to me as a legacy. Knowing that somehow I had earned it made me feel both humble and proud. It gave me an understanding of my parent that I had never before felt.

I walked the team to the livery barn. I unhooked the muddy traces from the singletree and unbuckled the neck yoke straps and hung collars and harness on wooden pegs. Then I led them around by halter ropes for a half hour until they were cooled out. After that I watered them slowly and filled their feed boxes with oats. I forked timothy and bluejoint into the mangers. While they ate I went to work with currycomb and brush and when I finished, their mahogany bay coats shone like polish on a gambler's shoes.

While Nip and Tuck stood hock-deep in fresh straw bedding, I rubbed their legs with strong-smelling horse liniment until the quart bottle was empty and my fingers were cramped.

Long after the barn man had finished caring for Lewis and Clark and Roulette and Faro, I was there telling the Tucker bays about how they had won the race. It was strictly horse talk, not meant for human ears.

I hadn't meant to spend the whole afternoon there, but I did. I was still there when my father finally located me. He said he had been hunting all over town for me. He looked at his watch and it was almost six o'clock. He said if I was to get outfitted from the skin out at the Mercantile, and get a hot bath and haircut at Shorty's Barber Shop, I'd better shake a leg. He handed me a ten-dollar bill and said we'd eat that chicken dinner on Will at the Great Northern Hotel.

He looked the bay team over. "Slick as seals," he said as we walked out of the barn, his arm across my shoulder. "You did a first-rate job on that team, son. Old Tom couldn't have done better." He asked me if I had taken a look at the other two teams.

I told him I saw to it that the horses were cooled out before they were watered and grained, had fresh hay in their mangers and clean straw bedding. I reminded him of what he'd always told me—never leave it to a livery stable hired hand to take care of a horse. Those two teams belonged to the ranch, and it was my job.

An hour later I came out of Shorty's Barber Shop in my town clothes. I'd had a bath and a haircut.

After dinner at the hotel with father and my brothers, I walked down the street, feeling warm and good inside. I didn't know a kid in town my age so I was going on a high lonesome. I had money in my pocket and there was nothing to stop me from painting the town a strawberry-pop red.

As I walked along whistling through my teeth I kept thinking of the play I had seen at the Great Falls Opera House—Dustin Farnum in *The Virginian*. I'd read the book twice and to my way of thinking the outlaw Trampas was the hero. And the Virginian had no business turning traitor to the cowpuncher who had been his friend. I likened Trampas to Kid Curry, and the Kid was my friend, and I felt I sort of belonged to the Wild Bunch.

I remembered the song that Trampas sang and I started humming it as I headed across the tracks for Doc Murray's Drug Store for a soda pop and some ice cream and candy.

"Ten thousand cattle straying . . .
I quit my range and traveled away,
So it's sons a guns,
That's what I say!
I've gambled my money
All away!"

I was Trampas in my black sateen shirt as I walked along with my new Stetson at an angle across my eyes.

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